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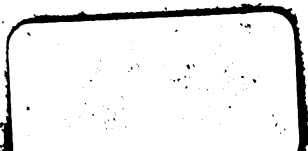
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8/-
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A
MENTAL TOOTH-PICK

FOR
THE FAIR SEX;

OR,
SOMETHING USEFUL *to occupy their TIME, in the*
Absence of BETTER AMUSEMENT.

*La prudence vous conduit a une vie aisee et tranquille,
que tous les emplois bruyans ou autres accomplissemens
ne peuvent nous donner.*

Prudence conducts us through life with that ease
and tranquillity, which all the boasted offices of
other accomplishments can never confer.



EDINBURGH:

PRINTED BY SCHAW AND PILLANS

And sold by J. GUTHRIE, Nicholson's Street, and
W. DICKSON, High Street, Edinburgh.

1797.

270. 9. 704

At p 135 is a tiresome narrative
the plot of which is varied from
Boccaccio's Decamerone 2nd day
story. "Cymbeline" is partly
founded on this story.

At p 107 is the story of Titus
& Gisippus similarly treated
from Boccaccio 10th day
~~story~~ ^{but} founded on a

Entered in Stationers Hall.

passage in V. Maximus. This
story has been very popular
and is probably of eastern
origin.



TO

CLEMENTINA GOODALL.

WHAT a pity that so handsome a name should be so often and so much abused ! It is some small consolation, however, that the season is fast approaching, when in reality it will be saluted with proper respect. We are assured, that in the realms of never-ending day, neither a counterfeit nor base metal, though ever so nicely gilded, shall pass for current coin. And it were to be wished, that, even in the present state, the distinction was somewhat more minutely observed. Clementina, my address to thee shall not

A 2

consist

consist in flowers of learning, polished periods, or nicely studied compliments ; a few plain truths, expressed in simple language, is all thou hast to expect : and if this mode should happen to hit thy taste, so much the better for me. It is true, in many dedications it is usual to rifle the apartments of the dead, and bring back a long list of ancestors, with their wonderful achievements ; ornamented with all the studied decorations of highly exaggerated praise ; but as I am not so well acquainted with your relations, as would be necessary for a just delineation of their respective characters, such an omission will require no apology. I am sorry to say, that even my intimacy with yourself was too much in the *en passant* style : therefore my whole panegyric shall consist of this single observation, that you appeared modest, comely, and well-made. If this account should chance to meet your eye, and you should be able to know yourself, and find from this

mode

mode of address who I am, I shall surely respect your ingenuity, and allow you more than ordinary penetration. If Fate, as I sincerely wish it may, should consent to our better acquaintance, and that I find your other accomplishments correspond to your external appearance, I shall be more liberal in my future encomiums ; and till that is the case, I hope you will excuse me for being so reserved. Adieu,

Dear Clementina,

And believe me to be yours with the
sincerest respect and esteem,

Candid-ball, }
May 1797. }

PHILOGUNA.

N.B. It was said of a painter, not very remarkable in his profession, that upon shewing the great Apelles a picture of his, and informing him at the same time, that he had taken but a few hours to finish it, he received this reply, " Though you had not told me so, yet I plainly

fee cause enough to believe, that it is no more than a hasty draught." An apology, or expressions similar to this observation, was just what I once intended ; but I have now thought of changing this cant, and, instead of telling the world that it is the hasty production of a few days, I think it is better to be modest, and say nothing about the time I employed in preparing it, lest I should only betray my ignorance and self-conceit ; acquaintances with which I may be familiar enough, though I should not publish it to the world, by such fashionable excuses. It would seem, from my being so very fond of my own invention, that I really thought others would be equally so ; and that it would be a great disappointment to the impatient crowd, who were eagerly gaping to swallow my wonderful performance, if they were not as rapidly favoured with it, as I had been in preparing it. But these ideas in reality I do not entertain. I am perfectly convinced,

vinced, that the world would not miss either myself or my child ; but if the judicious part of mankind will suffer this production to pass unmolested, I shall thank them for their kindness. I care not from what motive the indulgence proceeds, whether from compassion or approbation ; though I must confess, that the latter is what I should wish to merit. I know full well, that the Public is not to be much interested in the fate of my Pick, but it concerns me to make such concessions as are consistent with plain honesty. Original colouring is the principal feature of this performance. Some thoughts, I acknowledge, are borrowed, and manufactured in my own style ; such passages as I thought related to my subject, I have liberally quoted. But even after this confession, I by no means consider it as a spurious progeny. If any person should say otherwise, however, and claim it as his own property, I shall not think it worth while to quarrel

quarrel with him, fend him a challenge, nor even trouble him with much contradiction.

MENTAL



MENTAL TOOTH-PICK.

Great blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds,
And though a late, a sure reward succeeds.

CONGREVE.

I have always been of opinion, that witticism in possession of an ill-natured or imprudent person is a dangerous weapon. Though ever so innocent, it should be cautiously employed. A satirist and lampooner, who are in their element only when their captious humour inflames as it operates, are neither proper subjects of panegyric, nor fit copies for imitation.—Therefore my Pick shall smell but little of their oil.

It is not necessary to import the materials of my simple instrument from foreign lands; nor are the mines of Peru the proper place to find them; they lie within the reach of all who sigh
for

for an acquaintance with virtue, of all who revere her venerable form ; for in mental reflection the search is gratified, and the secret discovered. I have served an apprenticeship under the influence of the torrid zone, and know the superiority of an accomplished female too well, ever to disrespect that valuable character. I should not in the least quarrel with any sensible writer, for inverting the proposition of a great moralist in the following manner : A candid virtuous female is the noblest work of God, and the brightest part of the creation.

From this plain declaration, the female of reputation may easily perceive, she has nothing to dread from the pen of one who ever has, and still continues to wear, the livery of sincere affection. If the cause of female merit should receive no great lustre from so weak an advocate, that of innocence shall never suffer any false construction, or ungenerous representation, from any feeble effort of mine.

Having proceeded thus far in the style of egotism, which an eminent character, who was well acquainted with the rules of politeness, and knew equally well how to describe the essentials
of

of good breeding, so much and strongly discommends, I shall take an opportunity of entering into a more eligible direction, as soon as I can get rid of a necessary prelude, which requires some little investigation.

Some may apprehend, that a tooth-pick is a piece of furniture that can easily be wanted ; and that many use it more by way of ornament, than as an instrument necessary for removing pain, or promoting pleasure. Small as it is, however, unless ingeniously managed, it may commit less or more mischief ; it may wound the tongue, and give a cloudy colour to the gums. But if, upon reflection, its good qualities are found to overbalance any inconvenience or bad effects that may attend its use, it would be improper to lay it aside, and noways criminal to employ so small a piece of luxury. Crumbs of food, lying in a state of putrefaction, are of a corrosive nature, and in a short time may hurt the enamel of the teeth. Removing this pressure is of great advantage, as it helps to keep them clean, and to preserve their polish ; and a case of beautiful teeth is no small ornament, to either male or female : if, then, it is found so necessary for the
body,

body, why may not one be invented for the mind ? and as I suppose mine is the first that has been made of the mental kind, I hope, if females of character (the only part of the sex whose good opinion I am desirous to obtain) do not think me deserving of a premium, they will at least approve of my Pick, for the novelty of the phrase. In every well regulated society, where the periods of civilization extend their graceful progress, the mechanical labour of the artist, in every new invention, where any degree of ingenuity is displayed, calls for the eye of public inspection, to examine its value, construction, and symmetry ; and praise is annexed to the performance, corresponding in some measure to the inventor's merit. A patent, to perpetuate his memory, is granted by public authority ; he receives a generous reward, accompanied with sonorous peals of applause. Have I any claim to such expectations or privileges ? Alas ! my flattering career has now lost its wheels, and my soaring hope is deprived of its wings ; for all I have to boast of, is no more than coining a new epithet for reflection. If my sincerity, and the honesty of my intention, fail to procure me the goodwill

will of mankind, I doubt much of meeting it in the way of merit.

An eminent writer justly observes, with his usual flowers of elegance, "That the acknowledgement of those virtues on which conscience congratulates us, is a tribute that we can at any time exact with confidence; but the celebration of those virtues we only feign or desire, without any vigorous endeavours to attain them, is received as a triumph over regions, not yet conquered."—*Delightful scenes please a correct taste, and the benefit of information will always excite the industry of those who search for refinement.*

The female who is familiar with labours of merit, who longs to learn what is beautiful in the production of arts, as well as what is ingenious in the delineation of morals, will not in the least be offended to meet here with a beautiful quotation from a masterly pencil, on the subject of education: "Should a master, after having given his pupil a few lectures on the elements of grammar, leave him at liberty to make the best of his way through the classes, without giving him the least assistance in the progress of his studies,

or pointing out the use and application of the necessary rules as he advanced in his learning, is it to be thought from this superficial instruction he would be found a complete scholar? Common sense will at once make the proper reply; and shall less pains or care be thought sufficient to nurse the virtues of the heart? to form him a good man, or a valuable member of the community to which he belongs? Is it easier, after having learned the rudiments of knowledge and morality, for a character to guide himself with nice taste, or correct judgement, in the labyrinth of life, and steer unshaken, in full triumph, a steady course of virtue, through the shoals, rocks, and all the other dangers he has to encounter, in a vessel without ballast, ignorant of her motion, and the skill required in her management, to subdue the swelling tide of corruption, and the boisterous storms of passion, than to understand the sense of a Roman or a Greek author?" When Ulysses intrusted the education of his son to the nobles of Ithaca, to one of them, in particular, he enforces the charge with this affectionate address, "O my friend, if ever you loved his father, shew him some proof of it in your care of his son, but
above

above all do not omit to form him just, sincere, and faithful."

The best method (says Socrates to his pupil Alcibiades) that you can make use of to draw the blessings of heaven upon yourself, and to render your prayers acceptable, will be found connected with the constant practice of your duty towards God and men. From these examples, we plainly see the anxiety which prevailed, in the former ages of the world, for improving the youthful mind. It would be a pity, if the present race and æra, so far advanced in refinement, should in any point or science have cause to blush at a comparison with ancient days. When a painter examines a new picture, he not only attends to the brightness of the colours, but the delicacy of the connected parts, and the art by which the whole is conducted. It is the nice junction or uniformity of the concordant lines, that principally excite notice, and furnish matter for approbation. Though I cannot promise my reader a model of finished arrangement, or elegance of conception, still a desire to trace the pure springs of truth, reason, and religion, I

flatter myself, will apologise for my defects, and procure me some little indulgence.

Refinement of mind, in every age and country, has been always thought the principal part of beauty. If education is admitted to be an effectual mean of attaining this rich ornament, then it is a self-evident truth, that it can never be too strongly recommended, nor too closely cultivated. Is the contemplation of female elegance, wherever it is seen, an object of delight? Is not the tribute of respect, and the partiality paid to it, when it appears to advantage, a powerful motive for encouraging a spirit of improvement? Let us pause a little, and look around us, let us see how much birth itself is adorned by a regular education; how a genteel female, by the careful labour of a few years, rises to notice and respect, and stands possessed of ornaments that will remain in honour till the latest period of life; ornaments which have the initials of knowledge, goodness of heart, and genuine religion, strongly impressed on their front; though they should not be altogether the tone of the times, nor particularly in vogue, the improvement of such lasting ornaments cannot fail, in the course of years, to reflect

reflect lustre and credit on the wise female who has judgement sufficient to discern their value, and steadiness enough to persevere in their pursuit. A constant and just sense of decorum in every opening scene, imparts the purest emotions of pleasure. How refined are her enjoyments, whose taste is regulated by the dictates of a well-informed mind. The eye of penetration must admire the female who is capable of being charmed, and of charming in her turn. The advantages of birth or fortune may secure the adoration of the vulgar; but she who excels in mental refinement, courteous behaviour, and an agreeable temper, shows the essentials of a correct and delicate beauty;—ornaments which command the respect of superior taste, of those who more highly admire the merit of a ripe understanding, than the accidental advantages of external form. The charms of novelty, like the unsettled blossoms of spring, wear a dazzling appearance, but are easily defaced; and when once they fade can never be renewed. The flighty character, like a temporary ballad, is only in request for a little while; but a modest sensible female will long continue to support her character. Curiosity is

awakened at the first sight of an elegant dome, but it is the riches within that establishes its lasting fame. The merit of a female is not altogether to be estimated from her great qualities, it is the placing them in a proper attitude that shows them advantageously. A soil, though originally fertile, if left without culture, will soon contract barrenness, and wear the face of a lonely desert; whereas a piece of land naturally sterile, and of a surface seemingly crowded with inequalities, by the ingenious hand of industry, may be made in a short time, not only to compensate the cultivator's toil, but even to vie with the first-rate productions of nature. The Grecians improved the arts and sciences to such a height, that the claim of competition was every where relinquished, and the laurels of knowledge flourished at Athens, with a degree of verdure which at that time appeared to surpass the rest of the world. Neighbouring nations admired their genius, and considered them as finished and instructive examples for their careful imitation.

If writers describe the Turks as somewhat slow or phlegmatic in mental proficiency, they take care to supply that deficiency by cloathing them

them with beauties no less engaging : they speak of their morals as gracefully polished, and almost irreproachable : for moderation of their passions, and fidelity to their word, they are allowed to be peculiarly distinguished. The Romans, early in life, acquired a taste peculiar to themselves. Female education was considered as a matter of the utmost importance. Matrons of established reputation were looked upon with respect, and as mothers to whom the sacred pledges of affection, distinguished either by character or family, might be safely intrusted. What a pleasant task to guide the tender mind with prudence and safety, over the false and dangerous rocks that lie concealed in the sea of life, and of which the thoughtless inexperience of youth could have no just conception. Who then so fit for this important duty, as a virtuous female, rendered venerable by age, and distinguished by solidity of judgement, who possesses an extensive stock of knowledge, and is universally respected as the honour of her sex. Judicious sentiments, expressed in plain language, unsophisticated reasoning on intellectual accomplishments, and daily lessons on moral purity, as
the

the greatest ornament of the sex, would sound from the lips of such a character, with a strain of the powerfullest eloquence : and when a fair copy of the instructions she inculcated was expressively represented in her own conduct, they could scarcely fail to be irresistibly impressive.

“ In articles of taste and luxury,” as observed by a very learned writer, “ the demand appears so arbitrary, as scarce to be reducible to any established rules.” Notwithstanding of this assertion, the figures and numbers which compose the character of beauty, may in some measure be discovered without the art of logic. In my opinion, it is not necessary to ransack the field of literature for information on the point ; it surely consists in the harmony of the heart, and the fabric is formed by the continued union of the richest materials. A natural honesty of look, supported by consciousness of rectitude, triumphs over all artificial beauty. Regular features, brightened by goodness of heart, and mildness of disposition, like the shades in painting, give relief to neighbouring virtues, and make the whole figure altogether lovely. Taste, roused by emulation, refines gradually ; and from a careful

careful imitation of beauties, the mind imperceptibly advances towards its highest improvement. But where no superior model appears to be consulted, or to excite laudable ambition, the field of refinement must be barren indeed. Though I thought to have made a new discovery that had escaped the notice of the learned, I find myself so much entangled, that I must relinquish my own fanciful excursion, and coincide with information more ripe than my own. It is true, if we consult the collected treasures of the historian, or peruse the laboured periods of the poet, we shall find their delineation of characters commonly drawn from the flowers of the heart, or the rich colours of virtue. But if we look around us, and examine human nature with any degree of attention, we shall find, that the most of mankind judge of beauty agreeably to their own fancy or caprice; some, from the wild conceits of a vitiated imagination, and others from reason and a correct taste. If the opinion of my landlady is asked, I think her sentiments will be much in this style: "She that has fewest faults, and acts best." The affable modest look, the benevolence which tenderly
 breathes

breathes in every expression, and softly smiles in every duty; these, in her book of calculation, are first-rate ornaments: These will endure the summer heat, and winter's cold, and will not fall like leaves in autumn. Such genuine marks of distinction will always continue engaging, and she who is in possession of so much grace will find her jubilee return with every rising sun; for the outward endowments of nature, or the highest improvements of art, when compared with the goodness of the heart, are low and artificial. This idea of beauty is very necessary to be encouraged at all times, particularly in early life, not only because the most important, but the first impressions are most likely to continue, especially when the understanding afterwards finds sufficient reason to justify its early partiality. When, with the dawning of the day, every elegant accomplishment is carefully nursed, and the mind by habit accustomed to contemplations of refinement, in the future progress of life, it will never (without reluctance) exchange its own approved possessions, for less valuable, or unexamined acquisitions.

A great moralist, who had a competent knowledge

ledge of the human heart, and whose poetical diction, and strength of composition, would merit approbation in any age, whose sentiments are the language of experience, whose intimacy with human nature is so great, and whose knowledge of the world is so ingeniously introduced into his writings, that a reader of ordinary penetration must admire the compass of his abilities, and even feel the force of his reasoning, tells us, when the gay season of life, in its various periods, is effectually secured, to give credit and belief to the council of wisdom, that the mind, in every period of its virtuous progress, possesses the best cause for rejoicing, and will not fail to exhibit the plan of this happy improvement to the years of maturity, with invariable delight. A continued sense of propriety, or a delicate taste for what is honourable, makes the soul shudder at the reality, and even at the very shadow, of what is criminal. It is a fact not to be disputed, that both male and female naturally partake of the prevailing habits of their company, or the quality of the employments with which they are most familiar: Therefore this lesson of early cultivation is in
itself

itself so advantageous, that none sensible of its usefulness will ever wish to resist its influence, or think its authority intolerable. The plain injunctions recommended are the very precepts that a judicious parent, concerned for the credit of his family, or the happiness of a promising offspring, would sincerely dictate ; and what no children, but such as are evidently on the road to ruin, would ever treat with disdain. Serious impressions of religion, which comprehend the best definition of moral beauty, are not only the origin of reputation, but the fountain of uncontaminated pleasure. Improvement in this sage science forbids no enjoyment to which common sense would give its consent, or discretion desire to possess. If the musical voice of piety was understood in its proper acceptation, the honour of God regarded, or the dignity of human nature properly supported, too much care could scarcely be taken, in the morning of life, to create and encourage the noblest train of reflections.

This digression, the courteous reader, I hope, will not consider as wandering from the main point, or in the least losing sight of the subject
in

in contemplation. To give as little foundation as possible to the language of complaint, I shall here resume the former theme. Is genteel education become an object of particular attention? and is the affection of parents sensibly awakened to behold the improvement it is able to confer? No criterion can distinguish partiality to a favourite more conspicuously, than the adorning of her mind with every necessary beauty, and looking often with a watchful eye at her morals. A female stands in the same degree of consanguinity to her connections, is perhaps as capable of receiving instruction as any of her family, and possibly makes a brighter figure in the art she studies; of course has the best claim to an equal share of tenderness and attention. The principal parts of her education, in modern times, consist in French, dancing, drawing, and music, and all these are highly ornamental, when what is more essential is cultivated with the same degree of seriousness.

A young female is often hurried to town, and immediately taken to a boarding-school, as the centre of every accomplishment. Here she finds new associates, who require new manners: big

with every enterprize, and elated with every hope, however vague, the imagination is soon glazed over with the most fanciful, as well as the most flattering ideas. Chimerical figures of fashion and empty pageantry, are considered as the summit of human happiness. While the judgement is not perfectly ripe, how easy for the draughts of fiction to steal forward into favour, and by unfair colouring to keep virtues of the first quality at an awful distance. The gay female enters the world, with every happy prejudice in her favour; she imagines herself certain of accomplishing her purposes, and of obtaining the rewards due to established merit.

When the Sirens of flattery are high in favour, the eye is entertained with whatever they think beautiful; and Vanity's sickly appetite is regaled with their various delicacies: The treasures of delight are every where laid open, and novelty blooms alike on every hand.

Thus do the smiles of fancy diffuse their whimsical and unsteady rays, like the ancient Scythians, who, by extending their conquests over distant regions, left their own throne vacant to their slaves. Where prejudices blind the mind, and the

the fogs of delusion darken the planet of refinement ! truth and impartiality are not seen in their native colours, nor are their instructive voices distinctly understood. Though the scenes of happiness lurk under no foreign mask, the search is often made where only the shadow is found, and that shadow is without hesitation taken for the substance. The song of hope extends its enchanting sound, and the inexperienced heart rejoices in its melody ; each day swells with the reflux of pleasures, variable as the cause from which they originate.

Those precious hours designed for improvement, are devoted to cards, or other insignificant pastimes, instead of being usefully employed in collecting materials of taste, calculated to enlarge the sphere of refinement, or promote employments more rational.

The transactions of the day are soon hurried over. Reflections which require deep penetration are troublesome, and therefore are soon dismissed, lest they should sadden the thoughts, and spoil the appetite for light amusements. A rapid current of conversation rolls on the milliner, the mantuamaker, and a numberless group of other

figures, found necessary to employ the tongue without intermission. Concerts of music and public assemblies are current courses of entertainment ; how such a one danced, how elegant her person, what a degree of dignity in her carriage, but not a single expression about the propriety of her conduct, or the refinement of her understanding. These subjects are airy and insinuating, and the school of meditation, in which the young female but too much delights. A latitude of this nature, in connection with a narrow set of principles, or a confined view of human nature, cramp the spirit of improvement, and help to encourage strong prepossessions either for or against matters of no great importance. In the open unsuspicious season of life, opinions so disseminated, are often greedily imbibed. But having taken root, and being once naturalised, it will require more than an ordinary effort entirely to eradicate them. In almost every age of the world, it has been less or more the practice of philosophers, poets, and historians, to lash the vices of their time, and complain that moral virtues were fast approaching the borders of depravity ; the usual cant employed to convince us, that
former

former generations had carried all the spoil of moral improvement, and other valuable blessings, along with them to the land of forgetfulness, and left only the refuse of beauty and taste to their successors. For my part, I cannot say that I am a convert to this opinion ; nor do I see any eligible cause for supporting such reasoning. And though, from the liberty I have taken, it may be thought I wish to lay an embargo on the little levities of youth, I hope my sentiments shall not be understood as alluding to the sex at large, nor as comprehending all our females in one class ; for I believe the present æra may produce as honest, virtuous, and finished females, as any of the preceding. The ancients, which many seem enthusiastically fond of extolling, I suppose, differed from those of our own time, only by their dress being less handsome, their language less elegant, their integrity less genuine, and themselves less accomplished. In opening the views of the youthful mind, and suggesting subjects of contemplation, caution, in most cases, is quite requisite, not only in the choice of chaste, edifying themes, but also in giving the narration an engaging dress. Innocent and interesting

anecdotes might many times be exceeding seasonable, and help to produce a pleasing effect. The gay colours of vanity, which are so ready to inflame, might by such habits be gradually mortified, and the current of thought run with constant delight, in the direction of improvement and happiness.

Innocent amusement, confined within proper bounds, is surely requisite; and none in possession of common sense, or who knows the value of health, will ever discommend its effect. But to assign it the place of moral improvement, and make it the chief object of pursuit, is a piece of conduct far from deserving credit, or being worthy of encouragement. Life, when regulated with judgement, is a pleasing scene, rich with beauteous decorations, fruitful in acts of benevolence. An hour once a-day devoted to moral entertainment, would open a door for refinement and attention to the various occurrences, which occupy the ruling thoughts of mankind, in their different attitudes and consequences; would help to enliven the mind, and lead to a train of useful reflections. Inquiry into the quality of virtue, or the deformity of vice, with the lines and
colours

colours peculiar to each; these or similar lectures would be more than killing time; money bestowed on a teacher for such a purpose, would be profitably spent; the advantages of which would appear like the ripe increase of harvest, in the progress of future years. A respectable character, whose name I cannot recollect, seriously recommends œconomy of taste. He is quite clear for confining friends, as well as books, to a certain number; desiring but few of either, if these are judiciously selected. From the merit of the books with which one is familiar, the turn of the mind is soon discovered; for taste will naturally seek for qualities of its own complexion; as clothes which cover and adorn the body should always be genteel, without affectation. Reading practised for improvement, and not for ostentation, will lay up treasures of edifying information, which will entertain the intellect, and adorn the conversation. Decency in dress shews a delicacy of taste, and a modest diffusion of knowledge adds lustre to its fair author. Silence frequently performs the office of speech; and this sort of eloquence sometimes does more execution than the most elegant address; like sus-
pensions

pensions and long pauses in music, which contribute as much to harmony as the most melodious notes. "Glittering wares, if continually exposed, lose much of their brightness, and are easily stained with much handling." A comely female, the more natural she appears, the more beautiful; she is sure to lose nothing by the want of affectation. There would be less danger in meeting her adorned with all the advantages of dress, than in seeing her conduct artfully distinguished, by the attractive grace, and delusive manner of those, who have neither had access to good company, nor enjoyed the benefit of a virtuous education.

Modesty is a quality so acceptable, that it forms an apology for many deficiencies, it is an armour scarcely to be pierced, and on a sensible female fits very handsomely.

"Distrustful sense with modest caution speaks,
While flattering nonsense in full volleys breaks."

Science will act with economy in the display of its merit. The discreet female will rather content herself with having more literary knowledge

knowledge than she chooses to publish, than that others should censure her for affecting more than she has. She is not clad in her best suit at her first appearance ; but thinks it better to gain ground gradually, than to seem retrograde in her motions. A judicious female will cheerfully sacrifice the light amusement of a dance, the luxury of a repast, or any other pleasure of the season, to taste sincere and solid enjoyment ; by cultivating close acquaintance with some favourite author, where she finds a lasting feast prepared for her mind. I do not think it rash to censure some characters, who would be much offended to have their taste or judgement disputed, for maintaining that learning and coquetry in a female are synonymous terms ; and to the embellishment of education and sound sense, uncharitably append the epithet of *affectation*. Though books and their contents are not to employ every hour of the day, the female who is well acquainted with such sensible neighbours, is not, in my slender judgement, the less qualified for sprightly conversation. A choice collection of books, with an inclination to peruse them, not only steals away the languor of a dull hour,

but

but strengthens the understanding, quickens the apprehension, and renders the company of so much excellence a fund of agreeable entertainment.

But much depends on the quality of the books, with which one enters into a familiar *tête-à-tête*, and the nature of the subject on which they treat. The marvellous and fictitious communicate but a slender share of pleasure, their information having no great connection with truth; therefore it is not to be supposed, that these uncertain guides always point to the path of security; nay, their course is the very reverse.—

Barren uncultivated deserts are their line of direction, and their false colours impose on the credulous mind a yoke of delusion, almost equal to Egyptian bondage. And when a taste for this sort of reading is once unhappily acquired, a strong effort must be made before the relish loses its edge, and the fancy is effectually disengaged from the false scenery. Novels, plays, and fables, (excepting a very few indeed), are not productive of the expected instruction. But the passionate desire for such paltry productions is perhaps rather a misfortune than a vice; tho' their prevailing tendency is less or more to cloud
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the understanding, with a vain and trivial train of thought, and are a strong stimulation to levity of conduct. The wrong bias, upon the whole, they are calculated to incite, can scarcely be compensated by any gratification their fanciful pages can impart. The propensity which young persons early discover to such reading, and the partiality they entertain for authors of this description, in my estimation, it would be highly proper to repress; and what is much more essential to their welfare, generously pointed out, with all the rich advantages which attend its cultivation. Religious and moral performances, are without dispute the solid foundation on which elegance of taste may be built, and built with safety. Entertainment of this quality, may be compared to a rich valley, abounding everywhere with correct figures of refinement, fitted both to amuse the eye, and regale the mind. Dr Blair's sermons, are subjects of deserved fame, and of finished beauty; remarkably distinguished by a continued and glowing vein of piety. His tender and instructive sentiments, in every opening page, are full of nourishment to virtue; and their elegant language is calculated to gratify the most refined and delicate

cate taste. Resorting to such polished acquaintances, on a Sunday evening, or any other day of the week that might suit the reader's convenience, would, in my way of thinking, be a practice never out of season, never inconsistent with any character. They are creditable connections; companions with whom any female, whatever be her distinction in life, may deem it an honour to be intimate. The divine who ingeniously gives Piety her superlative attire, the moralist who points out duty with discernment, and the historian who paints characters and events with truth and accuracy, are such company as will reflect credit on their associates. It is from such sources that the principal part of mental improvement is to be derived. Virtue, in her natural and most engaging colours, Vice, with its gloomy clouds of depravity, with the characters and consequences peculiar to each, are snatched from the jaws of oblivion, and exposed to public view, for the advantage of society, in the correct and commanding delineation of the masterly historian. The annals of barbarous climates, or of the most corrupt ages, may, in some particular circumstances, appear to be partially

tially transcribed, and probably all the transactions may not be recollected just so minutely as they were originally exhibited; still the principal and leading facts are held up to view in their narrations, with a tolerable degree of precision; and they seldom lose sight of truth, or relate circumstances which are merely chimerical. In history, a correct sphere of action continually engages the attention; you trace the rise and progress of human authority and civilization; ages and countries, the interesting affairs of nations, appear as objects of contemplation, and continually arrest the eye of inspection. The candid historian shatters the secret fetters of ignorance, and, without the least reserve, lays open to the glare of day the flourishing state of empires, or the gradual decay of kingdoms: together with the various causes from which they might date, either the origin of their fame, or the record of their ruin. The corruption of the world, and the knowledge of human nature, may be learned in history without expence, and seen without a mask. Whatever error in conduct gave just room for censure, or forfeited the good opinion of the public, though the ac-

tors are now silent, their example continueth to speak. The part entrusted them to execute on the theatre of life, is recorded with its corresponding portion of merit, or demerit. No concealment of the artful stratagems, by which inflexible integrity often suffered unexpected disgrace, or undeserved ruin, or by which the natural pride of power rose up, like a swelling torrent, to demolish stately fabrics of fame, not to be equalled by fair competition, or the ordinary means of improvement,—is thought necessary. History gradually unfolds the nature and advantages of different countries; the mildness or severity of climates; the strength and interest of nations; the rudiments of peace or war; and whatever concerns civil negotiations: it briefly comprehends the productions of art, and the transactions of former ages. The different forms of government, and their various revolutions, succeed each other in their natural order. The multiplied misfortunes which have been the repeated consequences of too much security or remissness, extravagant competition, or arbitrary severity, the sage pages of experience openly and clearly describe. So that no age or nation
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can lose credit, by borrowing caution from the admonition of other countries, and even from transactions not very ancient. The malicious designs of base minds to foment confusion in a country, or to kindle the fire of anarchy; the various deep-coloured artifices by which popular faction and civil discords swelled to rapid inundations; the happy causes by which the scent of dark machinations stole from retirement, to discover the snare, and counteract their horrid influence, before the secret ripened into age, or launched into execution; all these circumstances plainly appear, without palliation, or the least apprehension of danger. In contemplating the graceful figures, and amusing scenery of the historian, the reader, at a distance from the field of danger, may calmly view battles and sieges without turmoil; tempests and shipwrecks, without sharing in the conflict; the modes and fashions of other courts and nations, without either the toil of travelling, or the expence of a costly purchase. In fancy you may proceed to the field of war, and behold a Cæsar, a Scipio, and a group of other ancient and modern heroes, that could easily be named, with the fortitude of

foldiers, fupporting fatigue, and communicating courage to all around, by their looks, their adrefs, and their actions, which fly like electricity from rank to rank, till the enthufiafm becomes general, and the effect wholly irrefiftible. You may fee a vanquifhed foe, forgetting the horrors of bondage, and gazing with admiration, on the bravery of the hero, who, with the humanity of an angel, fubdues the proud fpirit of revenge, and, by unexpected clemency, redoubles the obligations he confers. The advantages to be gained by contemplating the judicious arrangement of an army, the manœuvres to be performed, the danger to be avoided, and the meafures to be concerted, are alfo numerous and great.

By hiftory you may be made quite intimate with the moft diftant parts of the globe ; may become acquainted with the meafures and treaties, the character and religion, the trade and politics of the Indies, as well as of our own and neighbouring nations. Into the fecrets of ftatefmen you are freely admitted, and thofe actions which it would have been once thought prefumption to oppofe, you may canvafs without referve, you may praife or condemn, agreeable to your

own inclination, without either the fear of censure, or the imputation of flattery. Those principal proceedings may be learned from history, in one day, which were long in gaining the summit of *eclat*, and maintained the fame, or agitated the counsels of nations, for a vast number of years.

Cardinal Mazarine is one of the fortunate few, who was greatly beloved, both by prince and subject, while living, and who, after his death, was universally regretted.

A monument of no less respect, the British Cabinet at present seems to be fostering, and bringing forward to maturity. If the same uniformity should henceforth prevail, that has hitherto regulated Mr P's. measures, his friends will have no cause to blush for his conduct. Let the tongue of candour speak, and the eye of inspection look around;—to such witnesses his merit must seem great, and to shine without an eclipse. As a financier, how inventive and judicious ! Respecting his abilities as an orator, the elegance of a Cicero, the strength and reasoning talents of a Demosthenes, he happily unites in his manly exhibitions.

The chart of life and of history is a copy of something more serious than fancied novelties : each feature is big with facts interesting in their nature, variegated with extensive information, and richly clad with the garb of distinction ; more than obliquely treated by the eye of discernment, and the scientific pen of genius. In history you may cull the flowers of every virtue, and leave the thorns of misery to torment those whose complicated follies arose to view, in the deceitful paths of false desire. When the game of vice is acted, as it is at all times, and in every country, though not with the same degrees of guilt, the fruit of it will less or more appear, and the recollection return with fresh aggravation : for the recurrence of similar premises cannot fail to produce effects of the same nature. The friendly intention that kindly marks out the savage rocks, on which virtue and innocence, refinement, fame, and happiness, recorded their names and character in the list of those doomed to be unfortunate,—can never be too highly prized. In every doubtful scene, buoys are beheld, and with impressive eloquence warn the world of those secret dangers and deceitful shallows

shallows, where levity and indiscretion have frequently felt their folly, and unexpectedly stranded all the ill-calculated treasures of their flattering hopes. You see the cost of lawless gratification, minutely discerned, and faithfully exhibited. An impartial picture of friendship is displayed, and cowardly pretensions to it are stripped of their artful plumes: the beautiful colours of sincerity are placed in their proper attitude, and gain the attention of candour and integrity. The conversation of men of letters, who once shone in the walk of literature, you may enjoy as your intimate acquaintances, and with them may talk as familiarly as with your nearest relations. The wise precepts of philosophy, and the just disposition of the colours and figures of rhetoric, you may examine at leisure; and although these lectures should not be so animating to you, as they have been to those who heard their refined authors, in the flow and fire of declamation, still you may enjoy information, mingled with pleasure. Their lives and examples continue yet to charm and to instruct; their enchanting themes are pregnant with moral virtue; and the great beauty that
its

its influence imparts, they felt as well as inculcated; and by so doing, plainly pointed to the reward by which the uniform progress of virtue and integrity deserve to be distinguished.

The ceremony attending introduction into company, require, in your closet with your author, no preparation; nor from a perusal, if his taste is good, do you run the least risk of having your morals tainted with depravity. You have it in your power to chuse your society, and to continue or disengage yourself from it, just as taste or pleasure may prescribe. You need not undergo the penance of a dull anecdote, a tedious narration of trifles, nor the profane conversation of the profligate; but may dismiss the haughty and impertinent, without the least fear of being loaded with the epithet of prude or coquette. History is a safe companion to consult; it will enable its favourites to form their expressions with accuracy, and frame their actions with judgement. To speak in the language of that elegant, inimitable Poet, Mr Thomson, "She will, from this standard of taste, refine her own, correct her pencil to the purest truth."

A habit of reading with proper penetration, not only seizes all the passes which commonly lead to the avenue of levity, but also feasts the mind with delicacies, quite remote from the amusement collected from vulgar prejudices, or slovenly expressions. From the plain recital of these incidents, we may easily perceive how highly useful it is to be well acquainted with history, and how richly it contributes to improve the conversation. Thus the amusement of reading, while regulated with judgement, will at once polish the thoughts, refine the understanding, and convey wisdom to the heart, through the medium of pleasure.

The present mode of education, I should think, would suffer no depreciation from serious and frequent attempts to embellish the youthful mind, with a taste for internal ornament, as well as external decorations; and to direct the principal part of their application, in the opening bloom of life, to the adorning of their judgement with the fair garb of virtue. Moral beauty, early and carefully cultivated, kindly diffuses over the soul, in every period of life, the sunshine of deserved fame, and unclouded happiness.

Voter

Votes of approbation, may be secured by false means, but their credit will not be long maintained, unless they are supported by a firmer foundation. The gems of religion, though they may not have the same beauty to every eye, are not the less valuable upon that account; the artist, without the help of either a touch stone or a microscope, can distinguish the genuine from the counterfeit. Perhaps candour and truth are in no case more necessary, than in examining propositions where the interest of religion is concerned; but if treated with the impartiality suitable to her character, she has nothing to fear from the closest investigation. Some countenances are covered with more than common attraction, and are formed at once to awaken surprise, and to secure virtue against the hostile attempts of malice and rudeness. Beauty is ever accompanied with genuine simplicity; whose unaffected features are so plain and engaging, that the fair actress steals upon the heart insensibly, and every where produces a welcome emotion. The choice flowers of innocence and virtue, have expressions of taste, not only in the finery of their foliage, but every fibre is full of significance, and

and pregnant with some valuable quality. Religion, in her simple artless attire, though she stoops not slavishly, nor conforms her mode to the fashion of every fancy, is not on that account the less respectable. The homage of her friends is a tribute of unforced devotion, the prejudices of her foes make them repine at the sight of her unusual banner ; but the umbrage she cannot completely remove, she in some measure, reduces to silence. Her aspect is pleasant and joyful, as the noon-day sun ; and the serenity of heaven smiles in her look. Her voice is full of harmony, with the breathings of humanity ; she enters not into private connection with the thunder-bolts of hostility, nor ever gives her sanction to indecent feuds. Thus the proclamations of the Christian scheme roll away our fears, like noisy waves, to die before us on the shore of hope. Her face of love is no glimmering taper of uncertain ray, that points to paths of doubtful termination, or that leads to the lonely walk of delusive superstition ; but the bright effulgence of eternal splendour, durable and fair as its Almighty Author. To finish the description,

description, I shall quote the words of a polite,
as well as a Christian poet.

Believe the muse, the wintry blast of death,
Kills not the buds of virtue; no they spread
Beneath the heavenly beam of brighter suns,
Through endless ages into higher powers!

Religion was prescribed to the human species,
as a necessary rule of duty, in the early dawn of
creation, as well as to every succeeding age :
and whatever part of ancient records we chuse to
glance over, we shall find, that in every climate
or nation, where its generous influence was op-
posed, where its authority has been degraded,
and its friendly visits coldly admitted, rudely
entertained, or forced to depart, cruelty and
ignorance have immediately reared their serpen-
tine heads, and barbarism opened the way for
an influx of savage manners, to occupy the de-
serted station of its heavenly form. But where
the religion which is from above, pure and
peaceable, lays open her beauty to the gazing
eye, like a good picture executed with a master-
ly hand, she will display her colours with a
particular lustre. To every individual, as well
as to every community, she adds a gracefulness
that

that is truly divine; for she is the very finew of beauty and health. "Length of days
 "are in her right hand, and in her left, riches
 "and honour; her ways are ways of pleasant-
 "ness, and all her paths are peace." She is the
 parent of felicity, and the guardian of innocence.
 Prosperity and pleasure look best in her dress,
 and adversity derives its only consolation from
 her refreshing cordials. Her counsel is that of
 an angel, and the symphonious notes with which
 she delights to entertain her principal favourites,
 are sweeter than the music of paradise. The
 structure of her felicity bends not before the
 blasts which assail it; her radiant intellectual
 light banishes the gloom of terror, and elevates
 the mind with increasing comfort, as we draw
 nigh the climate of eternal day. Our Saviour
 tells us, "that his yoke is easy, and that his
 "burden is light;" and religion is surely so, to
 those who shall literally imbibe its spirit. To
 declaim against all innocent amusement, bears a
 stronger scent of Pharisaical cant, than of Chri-
 stian moderation. It requires neither philosophi-
 cal disquisitions, nor acute reasoning, to convince
 us, that the gospel of the world will sometimes

act with a severity quite inconsistent with that Christian charity which covers the sacred oracles with consummate beauty. Religion, as explained by our Saviour and his disciples, consists not in a distortion of countenance, in a cloud of ill-nature resting on the brow; nor in seclusion from social intercourse, as if piety should have existence no where else, but in cells and cloisters:—no such sacrifices are required by it; it only forbids guilty gratifications, or that licentious inclination which boldly sets all laws, both human and divine, at defiance. To rational delight, religion can never be an enemy, for it is the honest good heart that has the best title to enjoy contentment; and to refuse happiness to the truly virtuous, and transfer it to the profane, would be equally irrational and unjust. The foolish flights of levity, or the dangerous excursions of impiety, to which a violation of sacred rites may easily waft its giddy votaries, are too often practised by the sons of inconsideracy. These graceless figures seldom speak in the style of devotion. Their acquisitions are not a collection of jewels, nor treasures capable of purchasing refinement of morals, or peace of mind.

mind. The persons who deal deepest in artifice, assume frequently an air quite opposite to their established habits. And as they know themselves in some measure destitute of natural means, they attempt to supply the deficiency by counterfeit ones; and to accomplish their purposes, they suit their language and manner as much to the character they affect as possible: For hypocrisy is a character which vice dares not avow; and a forced homage, which, however unwilling, it must pay to virtue, and which virtue, without dispute, is entitled to obtain. A few may admire those artful actors who can assume all the gay colours of the rainbow, with an equal facility; but integrity will secure esteem, and be supported with success, when the silly artifices of dissimulation shall meet with merited contempt. Rich flowers communicate to their familiar associates a fragrant and refreshing flavour; in like manner, she who wisely discerns the beauties of divine improvement, will naturally study to acquire them; and will uniformly emit the grateful odour of a good example: for when once effectually initiated in virtue, the impression will not only remain in

full force, but from day to day gain her respect, extend her conquests, and increase her intellectual beauty. Modesty, truth, and virtue, in their unaffected robes, not only invite the eye of admiration, but make the person possessed of such superlative properties enjoy the serenity of heaven; refulgent beams of self-approbation ever smile on the dome, distinguished by ornaments so engaging; no foaming billows disturb her joy, no rising tempest-clouds her prospect, who is endued with discretion, and in whose breast moral beauties take up their abode. Be assured, says a sensible writer, that no character is more amiable, than that of a female; who, in the gay season of life, and in the triumph of beauty, practises the known rules of self-government, and whose correct taste, and sensible manner, publish at once, that her religion is much more than an obsolete term, or a flashy ostentation.

A light-house is a metaphor, (though somewhat coarse), that conveys an idea of security; religion, in like manner, points to the deceiving banks, and treacherous rocks, which promise nothing but danger and ruin. Therefore it is perfectly

perfectly requisite to have a careful look-out, in the narrow channel, and on a lee-shore; for it is by escaping the risk of these, and the boisterous ocean, that landing is attended with such singular degrees of happiness.

The giddy and the thoughtless may behold the serene aspect of religion, the unfashionableness of her manner, the circumspection of her behaviour, with contempt or indifference; for the sacrifices she requires may seem difficult, and the restraints she imposes exceeding great: But if the beauties which compose the Christian character be an object of choice, the duties it enjoins will appear necessary and reasonable. Respect to its sacred obligations, is greatness indeed; and in the constant and rational exercise of religion, good breeding, as well as sound sense, are exemplified, and beautify the character more eminently than robes of silk.

A judicious officer will seldom rank his best men in front, or expose them to the first onset, but make choice of the most eminent for a *corps* of reserve. The masterly historian, the artful poet, and the skilful painter, close their delineations with the finest colours, and make their

heroine, or hero, appear in the most engaging position, just at the finishing stroke.

Suppose the education of the young female now complete, the boarding tutoress giving her last benediction in the style of motherly affection, and the ripe information of years and experience, reserving the strength of her counsel to the concluding scene, it would perhaps consist of sentiments similar to the following. " You have already experienced a sufficient proof of parental regard, and how great a share of their affection your happiness has constantly engaged. Whatever appeared requisite to advance your improvement, or contribute to your felicity, met with a willing and liberal support. Obligations have been bestowed with so much generosity, that I persuade myself, your gratitude will express itself in every part of your future conduct, and effectually convince them, that you have been looking after ornaments of greater value than the fluctuations of fashionable dress; and that their partiality, in respect to you, has not in one single point been misplaced." The gloss that heightens the natural charms of modesty, is effectually destroyed, when exposed with eagerness

to

to every passing eye. Men always admire the cautious female, whose wisdom seems to tell the stranger, I give you leave to guess who I am. A proper estimation of circumstances, and of living manners, (the distinguished feature of her who has had access to company, and the benefit of a proper education), is not only health, and security to the soul, but tends to unfetter the mind from the confused clouds of illiberal prejudices, and in some measure to destroy the effect of selfish habits.

A female in the bloom of beauty, entering into the world, has the engaging prospect of various enjoyments, pressing forward to her view, and rising around her in thick succession. Her morning gay, her hopes alive, and her success in life seemingly secure. No furling tempests appear; all is friendship and favour; and to salute her sprightly form, happiness from every avenue rushes forward in haste. But the gloom of disappointment sometimes unexpectedly succeeds. The sun of hope grows dim, and the tumult of the ocean is heard; though this should not be the case, she surely bids fairest for happiness, who looks with penetration into every opening

opening event, and is always with caution preparing for a storm. What has the finest female in possession, that can authorise her to nurse pride, or cherish vanity? Her body at the best is feeble, and every moment of life subject to diseases and death. In her colour and complexion, in dress and elegance, the very flowers of the field outshine her. In the fullest bloom of beauty, how easily and unexpectedly may a change be effected! The most engaging form, even from a few hours sickness, may receive a very different aspect.

“What is the blooming tincture of a skin,
To peace of mind and harmony within?
What the bright sparkling of the finest eye,
To the soft soothing of a calm reply?
Can comeliness of form, or shape, or air,
With comeliness of words, or deeds compare?
No, those at first, the unwary heart may gain,
But these, these only, can the heart retain.”

A female of distinction and merit requires the application of the mental pick, as much as one who moves in a solitary unfrequented sphere. The former, like a bright star of considerable magnitude,

magnitude, dazzles with her intellectual accomplishments, no less than by her external finery; and from the united efforts of these singular embellishments, her temptations are not more various, than her conquests are extensive. Vanity may chance to insinuate herself by the deceitful artifices of flattery; and by her soft enchantments, strengthen the velocity of the passions, and provoke their appetite to the pursuit of enjoyments, sometimes not easily attained; but to which the wing of fancy, or a vague wish, may frequently extend. The alluring marks of distinction which wealth and fame bestow, raise admiration every where; and she who shines most in these plumes, is thought the peculiar favourite of fortune; but solid judgement will penetrate through the disguise, and discover that the greatest flow of affluence does not continually chain happiness to the gilded dome. She whose mind is much inflamed, or estimates her merit from the weight of her money, would find her interest promoted by just reflections on the various objects which claim so much of her respect. Let her calmly consider, that her riches are but small, when compared with those of Cræsus; and

and yet that the name of Solon alone could incite Cyrus to grant him a reprieve, which all his wealth was unable to purchase. She who feels impulsive elation from the highness of her birth, or the rank of her family, ought to annex to each of these articles, their natural significance; and as these are distinctions not of her acquiring, a few serious reflections will easily rectify the disorder, and expose the impropriety of attempting to establish continued fame on such infirm foundations. The female who can show no merit, but what she borrows from her parents or pedigree, is much obliged to her ancestors, but can never expect the same degree of sincere approbation.

A female of correct taste would scorn to estimate her character by counterfeit signs of merit. She will join the Grecian exclamation, "It is dishonourable for Sparta to fly, but noble to conquer."

She knows too well, that to flutter on the wings of her friend's reputation or fortune, would be to stipulate her own merit at a very low value; therefore, like a true chemist, she
endeavours

endeavours to make the proper use, without over-rating these advantages.

She analyzes the quality of complex materials, and philosophically reduces their value to the primitive standard. She will allow the world its riches, honours, and pleasures, and with the nicest discernment observes, that these have neither any fixed duration, nor wholly exempt their proprietors from trouble. In the circle of her own acquaintances, she beholds beauty perish in its bloom, ambition sink in its triumph, and, from the public news, sees every day fresh instances of riches deprived of their pride, and new graves opened for younger and older than herself. The language of these lectures is no feeble effort of eloquence; the truths repeated are strong and important, and feelingly recommend the model on which the fair female should form her conduct. The love of fame animates the exertions of those who entertain high thoughts of the dignity of human nature; and when that spirit is once effectually imbibed, it will carry on the prosecution of its schemes, till they terminate either in pleasing success, or sad disappointment.

In

In the breast where prudence secures the priority of place, no compulsion is requisite to enforce the benefit of propositions, which need no support from strength of argument, or depth of reasoning; having truth for their foundation, and happiness for the end at which they aim. The mental pick is so convenient an instrument, that it may easily be carried about, without the least offence to either friends or foes: its register is a kind of day-book, where accounts may be fairly stated; and a just computation of the small sums which are often neglected, and what they would amount to, if managed agreeable to the rules of oeconomy, might no doubt prove serviceable. For characters of the first rate are not so perfect; but less or more improvement might be made. The female of correct taste, has penetration sufficient to reflect on the quality of virtue, and the various favours she is capable of bestowing. She perceives that her credit procures every where the salutation of respect; that her own consequence is established, in proportion to the relation in which she stands to a connection so honourable; a connection, that not only reflects inimitable lustre on her name and family,

family, but enables her, when she retires from the gay crowd, to enjoy the serenity of solitude, and to peruse the volume of her own heart without the blushes of remorse. A valuable prize, in all ages and countries, has been thought a motive sufficient to produce abundance of competitors: and what acquisition can equal an unsullied reputation? a prize which can only be gained by the diligent improvement of moral beauties. She who has once effectually acquired the art of standing in awe of herself, stands in no need of Seneca's imaginary tuition; for if she is capable of knowing herself, she will be capable of correcting her errors; and would rather fall from the Tarpeian rock, than from the altitude of discretion. A portrait of such finished features, is a model of beauty, and a living book of unquestionable merit. Modesty in behaviour, as well as judgement in taste, invite the contemplation of the judicious, to behold arrangement and painting of no fictitious decorations. A capacity to chuse, and chuse well, belongs only to the ingenious and discerning; it is indeed great skill to know what is truly beautiful. The sagacious female, who is scientifically inclined, and

has learned to retire often within the sanctuary of silence, and to meditate deliberately on her own interest, in every sphere of life, will reap the rich increase of her wisdom, and be adorned in a manner quite different from the artificial embellishments of pride and vanity. The beauties of piety and truth, treasured up in the female breast, can scarcely be affected by any event, nor spoiled by the ravages of time. The rudeness of accidents may impair her health, or hurt her fortune; but can never injure her fame. She has got the key of beauty, as well as of happiness, who loves virtue, and daily pursues the path of integrity. This is the source of improvement, from whence all that is good and lovely proceeds; and a mark of distinction, superior to all the titles of dignity, that Rome, in her most flourishing state, could either invent or confer. Beauty, a stranger to the artifices necessary to support the influence, or preserve the fame, of external elegance, resembles the alluring sign of some eminent merchant, which courteously invites the stranger to step in to his shop, where he finds every thing within, corresponding to the outward appearance: were he
deceived,

deceived, indeed, he would leave it as soon as he could with decency, make the best of his way home, and banish all thoughts of a future visit.

Feelings of a delicate nature can have no great pleasure in associating with those of an opposite texture. Their manner, action, taste, sentiment, and language, have so much of a contrariety, that a sincere or lasting agreement, or genuine happiness, can scarcely be expected from a scene of such motley inconsistencies. The female who is emulous to excel, who wishes to remain in possession of herself, will never stoop to the artful strains of vanity, nor greedily swallow the low delusive language of flattery ; which tends to endanger her discretion, and deprive her of other sensible enjoyments. For when once the heart and ear are engaged on the side of such subtle deceivers, the disposition will soon change its natural sweetness, the imagination immediately swell, and be quite intoxicated with airy expectations. Not only shall mental improvement be stopt, and goodness of heart hindered to operate, the veil of modesty shall be dropt, and colours assumed, flattering as those of the

rainbow, but equally fluctuating. For she who is so unhappy as to evade the counsels of wisdom, and the salutary injunctions of religion, quits at once her connection with happiness, friendship, merit, and a character with herself and the world. Whereas the cautious female not only successfully overcomes temptations, but rejoices in the fruits of her victory: She selects with judgement the kind of arms proper to be used, and necessary to win the field. Her mind and her eyes are equally attentive to the destructive excursions of profaneness, and the giddy flights of unhallowed levity: she sees what they are, and views them as enemies, with which she is determined to enter into no terms of reconciliation; and whoever attempts to make their gilded bait sweet to her taste, she considers as those who have a design on her happiness. The first psalm is an elegant mirror for improvement; and by a substitution of the feminine gender, may admit of the following unlaboured comment. "Perfect happiness awaits her, who in the counsel of the ungodly walketh not astray; who envyeth not the way of sinners, nor delights to stand in their rank. The scorner's
chair

chair she will never occupy, nor laugh at those who do: her character may be compared to a tree, planted by a river in a fertile soil, whose leaf shall never fade, but in due season yieldeth abundance of rich fruit." While the smiles of prosperity continue to shine, and successfully extend their flattering rays, then religion may possibly appear to disadvantage; her breath may become languid, and her figure unengaging; and to get rid of her troublesome importunity, means and measures are always ready at hand.

Cardinal Woolsey, prime minister to Henry the Eighth, by his own pitiful confession, has left upon record an example of the woful consequences of exchanging the important duties of devotion, for considerations of infinitely less value. How melancholy and affecting his exclamation, when approaching the verge of the grave, "Alas! alas!" said he, "what a fall of fortune! had I been only half as faithful in the service of my God, as I was in that of my king and country, I am persuaded he would neither have neglected nor despised me, in my feeble declining days." But the sympathetic feelings are relieved from the struggle of commiseration,

by reflecting on the manly piety of the following character. The Duke of Portland being somewhat late, it is said, one morning in coming to the *levee*, King George the Second, with his courtiers around him, saluted him with a smile, as he stepped into the drawing-room, "There you come, smoking from your prayers." "I blush not at the observation, nor am in the least ashamed to own it. And I am confident, that your Majesty will not think me the less loyal subject, for paying my respects, and bending my knee *first* to the King of kings." A heroic reply from a martial spirit; but however bright this example may appear, we have a much higher to contemplate. The Lord's Prayer is a model without its equal; every expression is inimitably beautiful, and rich with instruction. It is an abridgement of the whole Christian system; its lessons are plain and pious; it is the breath of benevolence, and the language of heaven. These short, but sublime articles of faith, under which the extent of our duty is comprehended, can never be too much regarded. Serious and frequent perusal of this finished copy, with an intention to benefit by its healthy direction,

direction, has, in every station and stage of life, a close connection with happiness. It not only enjoins equity, and the spirit of forgiveness and humanity, in our prevailing pursuits, but it is also like a guardian angel, or a perpetual *memento*, against the insinuating arts of temptation.

Thus we may suppose the conclusion of her advice, not more sincere, than strongly impressed with the emphasis of religion, and the energetic beauties of virtue. Having so far revealed her mind to her ward, and faithfully discharged her trust, the governess allows her full liberty to pursue her journey home-wards, with the additional wish of much happiness, and a joyful meeting with her family and friends. It may reasonably be thought, that the particular attention paid to her education, in the different branches of useful knowledge, and the lessons frequently prescribed, for the regulation of her future conduct, have been so much to the purpose, that any further observations on the subject might be deemed either arrogant or unnecessary.

But if I thought my persevering in the matter

ter would not be construed into an offence, nor deserve the epithet of idle words, I would proceed a little further; and if my style and mode of discussion should not impart much information, I shall endeavour to supply the deficiency by the spirit of meekness. That a subject of this nature would require a greater degree of intimacy with the human heart, and a larger stock of experience and knowledge, than with decency I can claim, is a discovery which I stand in no need of being told; for I am already perfectly sensible of the secret. But as I am not out of conceit with female beauty, nor ever wish to be, the standard of the virtuous character, I must own, is the banner of credit I should wish if possible to reach. And though her cause should not receive much justice from so unpolished a pencil, I hope at least it has been and will be my sincere desire, that whatever respect she meets with, vice shall have none.

Whatever may be the stage on which we are to appear, a graceful introduction is a principal key to the spectator's affection, and tends greatly to overturn his prejudices against an accomplished actress. Great expectations are al-

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ways formed from the first appearance, and the more natural the exhibition, the pleasure must be felt in proportion. The voice of applause always flows easy, when a compliment is supported with sincerity, and is not the effect of forced complaisance.

She who brightens like the noon-day sun, and dazzles most when the scene seems darkest; who, in the station she occupies, disorders no feature with shame or confusion; who loses not a particle of her merit, but steadily keeps it up, and continually gains as she advances, has a fair and just title to the palm of honour. She may view it without a blush, and wear its encircling wreath upon her brow with conscious approbation.

A just estimation of any character cannot be made by a single glance, but in order to procure a correct opinion, various views are necessary; and if its beauties continue unclouded and equal; when observed in various positions, the result of the contemplation must lead to deserved homage; especially where natural uniformity, genuine taste, and correct judgement, are found strongly and often to co-operate.

Christina,

Christina, to the advantages of education and strong sense, adds a choice taste, and a singular share of modesty. To models of refinement, she is always attentive; and studies to copy beauties separated from rubbish, as much as possible: for imitation, without discerning some flower of elegance, is only carrying a taper, for exposing folly more clearly to notice. To personate a character, or adopt a part where the features are all counterfeited, and different from the original, is a disguise that soon betrays the imperfect actor it would artfully conceal. If elegant language, polished periods, and an affable manner, should captivate or engage one's taste, when covered with a mask; the charms which these create will rather augment than hinder the exposure of a corresponding beauty; and if any should think it convenient to assume the shadow of any virtue, the possession of its reality must be much more desirable; for it inspires equanimity of mind, and excludes that sort of tremour, or fear of detection, which is the inseparable attendant of imposition.

Whatever is natural in itself gains no advantage from dark wavering clouds, unless it
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be in the comparison, where the inferiority of the one makes the brightness of the other more conspicuous. The gracefulness that will always please, never drags any of the tawdry performances of distempered fancy to the face of light; for its inherent influence, consists in uniform wealth of mind, and standing habits of virtue, brought forth in the nursery of ingenious discernment, and reared to maturity by a sincere and continued connection with the spirit of moral and divine improvement. The plain honest colours of integrity, without any varnish or artificial aid, have a beauty quite correct, altogether superior to the paltry trappings of dissimulation. She who expects to enjoy the refined entertainment, that forms no connection with future anxiety, will find her interest in making the sphere of her innocence as secure as possible; for the accomplishments of an angel cannot be acquired, without particular attention to the duties which compose the character. The manner of the politician may have its admirers, and be thought the effect of knowledge and experience, notwithstanding of the character to which some annex it. Christina's conversation,

versation, in the principal parts of speech, is, like her gestures, quite natural, and richly coloured with mental beauties. Therefore, she will never sacrifice the honourable accents of truth, to the pliable style of flattery; nor seem desirous to please her companions, by quitting the character of integrity. She has beauties peculiar to herself; but her peculiarity is not so much observed in the order of her dress, as in the improvement of her mind. She has penetration sufficient to remark the advantages to be derived from reading, and the entertainment which useful books impart. She keeps her eyes open to behold her own actions; and effectually perceives, that no book requires more frequent perusal, than the volume of her own life, and the picture which her prevailing passions exhibits. She is never averse to self-inspection; her own heart is frequently examined, and with its various emotions she is well acquainted.

Every performance noted for its value, she treats with silent respect; and whatever is otherwise, she is not only anxious to remove, but to have the vacancy filled with some choice substitute. Thus, from a constant repetition of improvements,

provements, so conducive to happiness, she is in a fair way of accumulating more than a common stock of intellectual riches, and of giving her pleasures a more poignant zest, than the languid enjoyments of the miser, or the gross entertainments of the prodigal.

That a good heart, and the breathings of humanity, are first-rate ornaments, which claim every where the throne of affection, and embellish handsomely the station which they occupy, are discoveries which Christina will readily admit; for to meditation and inspection she is no stranger.

But the manner or foibles of her acquaintances, are not the materials which compose the train of her amusements, or form the chief subjects of her study.

Attentively she reflects on her own character, as she stands connected with society, and the public view to which she is exposed. She knows the nature of the part in which she is engaged, is serious and important; and examines the power of the causes, as well as the progress of every effect, with nice discerning, and impartial criticism. She is not in the least backward in

her inquiry, as to the figure she herself makes in the present sphere of existence ; nor as to the character with which she appears in the register of heaven, or the colour that her name and actions will deserve and bear, in the opinion of succeeding ages. A building erected with plain materials, of a solid substance, regularly conducted, and closely cemented, is always less chargeable, than the unsettled, insufficient, ill-constructed edifice : for the fabric that is founded on a rock, and bears in every corner the character of connection and strength, requires no security or out-works for its support. Thus Christina trembles for no eye ; her hand holds out no bribe to the witnesses of her folly ; she claims no patch of concealment for any part of her character ; for irregularity never forces the intrenchments of her virtue and honour. Her laurels are not like the spoil of conquerors, purchased at the expence of planting misery in the corner from which they had been violently snatched ; but the brightness of innocence, and the trophies of deserved fame ; the texture is extraordinary, and the quality durable : like Aaron's rod, if I may be allowed the comparison,

son, producing unfading blossoms; and fruit fully ripe, rich to the taste, and pleasing to the eye. In other articles, as well as those already mentioned, sensibility and decency will in a great measure regulate her taste. She will easily learn from the practice of inventors, or those who have a novelty in their manner; who, like the post-boy, carry a budget of news continually about with them; and deal out their fustian stuff, either wholesale or retail, as occasion may serve. But although prating and defamation are less or more the weeds of every soil, and the misfortune to which the best of characters are very often exposed, Christina is so far from joining in their rude vociferation, that she pauses for recollection, and finds that she has defects of her own, which, though she does not treat with the partiality of favourites, effectually repress her propensity to slander.

Thus, while she is conscious of inability in herself to reach conspicuous virtue, she sincerely sympathises with others engaged in a similar struggle. She knows that detraction, in every age, has had religion and philosophy for its enemies: And as it is by no means the man-

ner by which merit is made visible, she is sure to purchase no part of her amusement at such a price. She is quite sensible, that when a person has once found the way of being well employed at home, the difficulty of resisting the spirit, which aims at cropping the reputation of others, or which seems to delight in illiberal reflections, will gradually lessen, and at length vanish.

Detractors are tutors who will instruct their pupils *gratis*, and often in secrets which they ought to conceal. When the inquisition of malice begins to operate, a cloud of imaginary foibles are easily invented; but a sensible female will never feed the flame of ill nature. The rage of prejudice, she will strive to conquer, as discretion may dictate. The garb of hostility, and the thunder-bolts of revenge, she never meets in a similar form; but counteracts their influence by the spirit of mildness, and the smiles of civility. The odious vice of detraction is thus sensibly exposed by a finished pencil. "When the colours of calumny are once unfurled, volunteers flock to her standard, multitudes form her camp, for want of better employment;

ployment; and, flying squadrons are dispersed every where, so well pleased with the opportunity of mischief and pillage, that they toil without prospect of treasure, without hope of profit. But whatever may be the motive of their conduct, it is best to overlook it: for folly scarcely can deserve resentment, and malice is punished by neglect." If veracity was always to meet with indulgence agreeable to its quality, duplicity would never be in vogue; it would justly be considered as rubbish, of which common sense should be ashamed; and a meanness quite unworthy of entertainment. The language of truth is safe and graceful; the blushes of confusion, and the colouring of shame, are at no time the effect of its grateful accents. It changes not with circumstances, nor does it grow decipied with age. In short, it is the essence of all beauty, and the best letter of recommendation, that any can carry in their company. A discourse or conversation, darkly clouded with the counterfeit of truth, or the acrimonious remarks of the satirist, as the chosen figures of rhetoric,—effectually banishes the enjoyment of pleasure, and the quality of beauty. Decency in manner or
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expression,

expression, shows refinement of sentiment, and a delicacy of thought, happily seasoned with the advantages of acute discerning. Injurious liberties, in either language or practice, discovers a barbarous mind, and betrays great want of taste.

Christina's perceptions are always deeply tinctured with the beauties of truth; into whose place she will admit no substitute, however fair or flattering. And those destitute of such qualities, are none of her favourites, and but seldom share in her amusements: before she fixes her friend or acquaintance, she takes notice of their deportment, looks to the natural construction of their character, and in matters of such importance to her happiness, trusts no eyes but her own. In her retrospect of past events, she finds names upon record, that will be transmitted to future ages, with those stains of reproach which adhere only to the worst of characters, to those who wound under fair professions of affection; but when persons of this description appear, she wisely views their deceitful countenance, as a dangerous coast she is not to approach. When she receives money, she sensibly

sibly proves its quality, for she knows, in case she does not challenge the imposition in its season, she may chance to suffer for her credulity. Her friend she will view with equal precision; and as Euripides says of truth, that it loves plain language, affection, in like manner, should be sincere and genuine, without any connection with the variegated colours of cloudy dissimulation.

As she is cautious in the choice of her friend, she is also composed in her devotion, serious and punctual in her duty to her Maker. Respect to whatever is sacred, is her Sunday and daily disposition. She modestly attends the temple of her God; and her intention in appearing there, is not so mean a motive as popular applause, or the outward colour of religion; her decent manner and sober gait, which are neither borrowed nor artificial, will express something more amiable. She observes a line of conduct quite different from that which prevails at a ball, a theatre, or any other scene of amusement, where false pleasure sparkles in every eye, and a constant succession of compliments are every where exchanged. Her opinion

nion is not solely supported from its being the practice of the country where she resides, nor does it arise from the vain fancy of being noticed for the elegance, or peculiar quality of her dress. These are not her ruling causes of repairing to the house of devotion. The solemnity of her manner will repeat her business, and the impression she entertains will merit all due respect. She piously considers it as a place consecrated to the worship of her God, venerable from age, and calculated to influence her mind with a dutiful sense of the obligations she is under, and which she thinks herself bound to recognise. She not only studies to maintain a serious frame, suited to the external rites she countenances, but also a modification of manner, sufficient to overawe the wandering fallies of fancy, with this seasonable reflection, that the incense offered by the lips is altogether unprofitable, and an insult to the Deity, unless the heart sincerely joins in the sacred service. If the composition has taste enough to merit approbation, she will not churlishly withhold her tribute of praise: If otherwise, her practice will indicate more of the Christian, than to join with the ill-natured

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in their illiberal sarcasms. These are some of the beauties of Christina's character:

To do as we wish to be done by, our Saviour makes the principal point on which the authority of the law and the prophets was wholly established. Universities are not the only places to which we should repair, with a view to learn the obligations of virtue. The inclosures of erudition are not the infallible sanctuary we are to explore for a decision, corresponding to the logical descriptions we may hear of moral duties. The lectures of the philosopher, in the glowing colours of his expressive delineation, may please the taste, and charm the ear: his choice instructions may be continually seasoned with uncommon figures of rhetoric, strength of reasoning, elegance of language, and harmony of periods. Such subjects, no doubt, even in rehearsal or speculation, are both edifying and entertaining: yet it is the practice alone that claims the greatest share of approbation, and effectually determines the character.

Ordinary capacities can easily distinguish beauty from deformity; no depth of penetration is required to mark the natural features of each.

Virtue

Virtue and vice have ever been at variance ; and no argument has yet been found powerful enough to produce a reconciliation. Where the mandates of divine truth are opposed, and propriety of morals laid aside, or carelessly over-leaped, there lawless appetites are sure to rise and rage : and when that is the case, the fate of virtue may easily be figured ; for whoever purchases illicit gratifications at the expence of duty and discretion, is sure to over-rate his enjoyments. But the progress of virtue is always steady, and free from the tumult of passion or confusion ; therefore, in order to secure felicity, measures antecedent or in alliance with happiness, must be uniformly adopted.

A sailor, who had been fortunate enough to find in his wife a most amiable companion ; but not being able to make a proper estimation of his valuable prize, he neglected to pay her that tribute of respect, which is due to merit of the first quality. Like too many of the present age, he took a thought of acting the fashionable gentleman, by keeping a courtesan, or concubine. To expostulate with him upon the impropriety of his conduct, was but a vain attempt ; for he
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was too far gone in the disease called folly, to recover all on a sudden. When just ready to fail, delusion had so far repressed the generous feelings of affection, that a preference was given to the dulcinea, by waiting first upon her to receive her commission; which was extravagant enough. The poor wife was considered but as a trifling piece of furniture, scarce worth noticing: however, in taking his leave, by way of irony, he asked, if she had any particular demands? she modestly made him a reply, which I fancy he did not expect, viz. that she would be quite happy, and perfectly pleased, if he only brought her home a shilling's worth of wisdom. After reaching the place of his destination, being successful in his voyage, and on the point of returning home,—to the injunctions of the prostitute he attended minutely; and the article wanted by his wife was so low priced, that he thought it should also be sought for: And accordingly inquired at the first convenient shop, if they had any wisdom to sell. But surprised at the strange question, he was kept in exercise, and directed from one shop to another, till he reached the last, which joined the quay; he entered it, with
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asking, as usual, if they sold a piece of finery, called Wisdom.

The merchant being a man of more than ordinary ingenuity, at once understood him, replied in the affirmative, and wished to know how much he wanted. But before I satisfy you in that singular demand, says he, permit me to ask you a few questions, and I hope you will answer them with candour: Who desired you to purchase this same wisdom? My wife. That tells me you are a bad boy, and that you do not treat her with that humanity, or generous attachment, that nuptial engagements would require, and that an honest heart, which has a sincere desire to live in harmony and happiness, has a just title to expect. I fear some base enchantress captivates your affection, and makes you neglect your wife. After awakening his surprise by a suggestion so unexpected, he honestly acknowledged the authenticity of his discovery.

I hope you will not be offended, then, though I should deliver my sentiments upon this subject with some degree of freedom. When a man or woman create misery to themselves, they ought, and do often, pay for their folly. No vice will
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lose its influence, till its deformity appears sufficiently plain, to make us view it with aversion. Delicacy of conduct suitable to the character of a man, and a Christian, that will triumph over whatever is hollow or unsound, is necessary to be observed in an union which requires the exercise of prudence, and permanency of affection. Treachery in marriage is a base merchandize, that receives no sanction of approbation from being so common in the world.

Those who break through the sacred restraint, not only impose upon others, but also deceive themselves. And while the substance of happiness flies much faster than their fancy can pursue, like the roving cloud of a storm, there remaineth scarcely any shadow of comfort. You are now going home; as soon as you get snug into the harbour, land in your most shabby dress; wait first on this same favourite, make up a pitiful story of your losses and misfortunes, you will then see what reception you meet with: Repair next to your wife, tell her the same story, and you will effectually discern, which of the two has the best claim to your
H. affection;

affection: for those who cease to love virtue, every good man should cease to know.

He then took his leave, politely thanked him for his wisdom, and assured him he would closely adhere to his injunctions. The very day he reached his native shore, he forgot not to approach his mistress in the manner prescribed. His tattered dress, or indigent appearance, was no great entertainment to her eyes; the dismal relation of his misfortunes, to her ears had no music. In short, instead of expressing the least feeling of sympathy for him, she immediately assumed her natural assurance, and bluntly told him, she was amazed how he had the impudence to come near her house; and charged him to shew her his face no more. He recovered at once from his former frenzy, and gave her to understand, that he was certain her counsel would produce the desired effect, and that he was fully determined never to pay her another visit. Then to his own habitation he hastily directed his willing steps. His wife received him with a smiling countenance, and a hearty welcome: before he had got half-way in his gloomy narration, with the swelling tear
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in her eye, she kindly interrupted him ; and assured him, that it was not his money, but his heart, she was anxious to secure. Though she had no design to mix reproachful looks or language with her breathings of rejoicing ; yet she would make no secret of her desire, nor attempt to conceal her wish of fixing his affection. And if in that point she could only be successful, she would envy no one's happiness. The merchant's wisdom lost nothing of its value from importation. His heart was sensibly touched with gratitude to the one for his valuable instruction ; and with a glow of affection to the other, for her unmerited attachment, which for some moments could only be expressed in the silent language of admiration. He then candidly revealed the whole of the enigma, and from that day seriously improved every opportunity of advancing her happiness : nor would he ever allow any other woman to share in his heart, or divide his love. Therefore I shall leave them in full possession of happiness, and proceed to contemplate another picture.

Inconstancy always ranges without any settled object of desire ; therefore, to subdue this airy

spirit of novelty effectually, or change a taste once accustomed to variety, is a task not easily performed. Persons bred in the shades of retirement, instead of wandering among the meteors of fashion, which dazzle the world by their elegance and novelty, would do well to consult common sense: for to think of combining opposite qualities, or form a coalition between dispositions, against which nature and habit have declared perpetual enmity, is at once absurd and impracticable. A writer of eminence is of opinion, "That it would not be very difficult to find a suitable companion, if every man was content with such as he is qualified to expect; but if vanity tempts him to forsake his rank, and post himself among those with whom no common interest or mutual pleasure can ever unite him, he must always live in a state of unsocial separation, without tenderness, and without trust."

Wherever an extravagant disparity of situations or education takes place, gratification, though possible to be obtained, perhaps in some particular cases, it would neither be safe nor prudent to wish for, upon terms so unequal. When happiness perches itself on an elevation
difficult

difficult to reach, and where all seeming freedom is sacrificed in the acquisition, it would not be amiss to make a fair calculation, early and impartially, to view the object of pursuit, with her mental and personal advantages, and to see if her qualities are sufficient to make a full compensation for the anxiety they excite. The fable, where the father sent his son to the wood, with instructions, the first day to cut as high as his hand could reach, might dictate a lesson of wisdom, if wisdom could be caught from example. When the task of the day was over, with the tender feelings of sympathy, the father consoled with him, as if he himself had shared in the fatigue; so much indeed, that the young man was ashamed to complain, although the effect of his toil was speaking aloud, from every vein and sinew in his body. The next day's injunctions, as much upon the other extreme, were, to cut as close to the ground as possible. When at night he came home, attention and concern were ripe for utterance, and the effusions of benevolence were no less expressive, than on the preceding evening. The third and last day, no arbitrary measures were prescribed: The parent relieved

him from a task which he had hitherto performed with inconvenience and reluctance : A dispensation was granted him, to take his mark opposite to himself, without any particular order in his operation. Finishing his task with a good grace, he saunters home with the song of triumph ; the father, however, seemed to take no notice of his cheerfulness, but began to soothe him, as formerly, with the salutation of tenderness. Father, he replies, your particular concern claims my gratitude at all times ; but I think it at this moment unnecessary, for the labour of this day looked more like play than toil. My son, pause and reflect on what you felt and saw, hearken not to me alone, but rather to the voice of experience and wisdom ; for honour and advantage, result from their precepts.

Permit me to mention Miss Lofty. Had a gratification of your taste taken place, when much against my pleasure, your addresses were directed to her ; had you even reached the pinnacle to which your views aspired, perhaps you would have found a guest altogether different, and something quite foreign from the happiness
you

you had in expectation. You flew again to Miss Unfragrant: She, with equal arrogance, might have given you the sauce of repentance, or probably perpetual bondage would have been the chains assigned you for life. The last day you was pleased and happy, and seemed a perfect master of your business; read from that plain lecture, the part which you yourself ought to act. Make choice of the female whose education, taste, feelings, devotion, and behaviour, flow in a regular course; with whom you think happiness is in the greatest credit: for true taste, like Narcissus, is strongly taken with its own likeness. Lord Darnly, from his elegant appearance, rather than his merit, was raised to a rank far above what he had a right to aspire; the duties of which he was incapable of discharging, either with advantage to the kingdom, or honour to himself. The unfortunate, but accomplished Queen Mary, found to her cost, when it was too late to complain, and when the sallies of love, inspired by the imposition of external beauty, had lost their power to please, what ill-skilled messengers her eyes had been, and the unfair report they had hastily made of him

him with whom she was to lead her life ; for to this unequal choice all her subsequent misfortunes might, with strong presumption, be ascribed.

A volume elegantly bound, if it contains little information, neither sentiment, language, nor a support of virtue; its external finery will soon cease to please, and its fair polished appearance, which at first excited commendation, will completely lose its credit, and suddenly fall into disrepute. Another, though not bound at all, if it contains the marks of genuine refinement ; if every expression you peruse, and every page you open, seem pregnant with the riches of merit,—you are glad to snatch—from the jaws of obscurity, the remains of so much beauty, and to preserve it, though in a shabby outward appearance, from the fate of abuse or decay.

The picture of marriage described by a lively imagination, or the gay colours of the Poet, perhaps in romantic scenery, may have more of the fiction of a fable, than a delineation of the real state ; where all foreign deception should be viewed with an eye of jealousy, treated as an enemy to which no station of credit should

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be assigned. Many are ready to annex an idea of finished felicity to matrimonial connection,—consider it as the serenity of a perpetual sun-shine, where no tempestuous passion rises to ruffle the mind; but a sensible female will show her just opinion of the business, by the solidity of her reflections. She often consults the productions of nature, for lessons of instruction. She sees the juvenile flower of the spring, that makes so fair a shew, and emits such a pleasant flavour, soon stript of all its gaudy colours, and its stately pride blasted in full blow. From pointing to a figure so transient in its nature, a discouraging discussion is not in the least intended. Though it is too true, that many unhappy examples are recorded in every age, and seen in every country, notwithstanding of this, the sacred engagement should meet with no abuse from such an argument. When the torch of affection which leads the party contracted to the bower of hymen, and glows with mutual sincerity; when it is before hand understood, as a connection where happiness cannot be continued, without a particular desire to render life agreeable to each other,—the meaning, which never forfeits its natural beauty

beauty or sense, has shared in the relation. And from a countenance so fair, delight; in its principal quality, may reasonably be expected. When the prevailing taste or hopes of happiness, spring from the vain ideas of equipage and grandeur, and not from the good qualities of the character proposed, it is easy to imagine what may be the consequence of measures so irregular and ill digested. It is not in the palaces of eastern monarchs, that love without dissimulation has its seat of fame, or planet of dignity. The mechanic of Indostan may happily experience that periodical and sincere satisfaction, from the partner of his affection, which the sovereign of a great nation, in the variety of his enjoyments, and the confusion of his seraglio, labours in vain to acquire. Sincerity and candour are the elements where virtue loves to dwell, and happiness to smile: and where these valuable companions are pleased to reside, they are sure to procure and continue affection, much longer than wealth, grandeur, or Graham's celestial bed. The Spectator is of opinion, that sincerity and virtue are the first articles to be consulted; that where these fail on either side,

enjoyment

enjoyment is seldom at home, and felicity at the best but a fluctuating guest. Challenges of superiority are laid aside, where real affection is understood. Love is more than a skilful mathematician; for he will easily reconcile the lines of difference, and make them every where run parallel. Those who unite with a determined resolution of affection, of increasing their stock, by sharing the pleasure or interest of it equally with each other, will in a short time obtain that accumulation of tenderness, which prevails only in the soil where goodness regulates the passions. To the very silence of those we love, we generously ascribe ineffable charms: and the language of those we dislike, has a flaw in every expression; all their periods seem rude and unedifying. When a profession of esteem is fraught with tenderness, all the transactions of the day are conducted with good humour, and continued with frequent and serious instances of a happy understanding. Where disaffection speaks no tone of victory; where all its emotions are suppressed, before they swell into a stubborn disease, or habits of unhappy consequence,—pleasure and affection are then confined to their proper bounds.

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For without the art of reasoning, it appears as a plain fact, that if disgust once rises into rage, or violence, you may then look for the departure of peace, and hear her expiring voice pronounce a mournful farewell to the pleasures of affection. Ah! what a dismal scene! how dark and cloudy the prospect! every trivial circumstance will carry the construction of a crime, and even what is innocent in itself, to the eye of distrust has no beauty: comforts sicken into a solitary sadness, or a raging storm; and in the spleen of discontent, discretion is effectually lost. Therefore, to make the sinews of affection durable, marriage requires that a similar taste and affection form every part of the agreement, and continue to increase in their progress through the whole length of the relation. Those choice characters, whose minds are richly tinged with sensibility, can never be at any great distance from happiness. While the brightening beams of day smile on their steps, and join in their company; when the sentiments and pursuits of this state are not feigned testimonies, but the solid and genuine support of mutual endearment, pleasure then is something more than

than an idle chimera, it is that glow of enthusiasm that elevates the generous votaries to the first degree of rational delight. Therefore it would be as great a wonder, to meet with clouds of confusion in such a serene climate, as it would to find diamonds in the barren hills of Tenneriff. Before a marriage receives its date, should the voice of correct understanding make any inquiries, what may we suppose the qualifications that are mostly thought of, or considered as necessary to excite attention, and secure esteem? The question might not be so much framed to accord with the general practice, as with the periods of a correct taste, and sage penetration. Is she very beautiful? has she many courtiers? and what is her fortune? are not the principal inquiries which should be made, or with which a lasting prospect of felicity is naturally connected. It is not she who follows slavishly the caprice of fashion, who is ready to vary her taste, to suit the complexion of the times, from whom the pleasures of contentment, or of domestic enjoyments, may be expected. If much information and learning, in the estimation of some men, are not the qualities requisite to en-

courage happiness, or form a pleasant female companion, I should think that ignorance could never make her more agreeable, nor more fit for a partner in life. The song of the Israelitish women, that Saul had killed but one thousand, and David ten, is a plain proof, that, when a languid performance meets with a feeble encomium, meritorious actions ought to shine.

The principal beauties that common sense should esteem, and for which it should make its demand, is a sensible, feeling, and affectionate heart; a comely, modest, and agreeable behaviour. Does religion inspire a young woman with that Christian charity, that will make her remain passive or silent, and indicate no marks of rash judgement or severity, even when she cannot approve? Is it more from reality than shew, that the witnesses of her piety speak plain and aloud? These are refined qualifications; and if these are the friendly instructions to be learned from her, happy, for ever happy, is he who shall obtain her. He receives not all her portion at one payment; neither is it a yearly income; but, what is still better, a constant and daily revenue. It is only where the joys of
freedom

freedom shed their generous influence, that courtship is an act of inclination, or the effect of choice. During the force of the feudal system, when the laws of chivalry were in vogue, ruffians or barbarians were often the most successful in female conquests ; but as society began to improve, and fighting became less fashionable, the ridiculous exhibitions of a Don Quixotte began gradually to decline. Nothing can be more reasonable, than that love should direct in the choice of a partner for life ; and that the parties contracted in wedlock should enter into that compact with the most genuine affection for each other. " Love," says an eminent philosopher, " is a strong preservative against the infection of loose example : it helps to subdue all foreign opposition in the way of refinement, and gives a necessary supply to the finest virtues." To strengthen the foregoing assertion, I shall relate an oral narration, where a sudden revolution of sentiments wrought wonders in a very short time. A recruiting officer, who, with his party, had been billeted in a certain town ; the first night he was so much engaged, that it was somewhat late before he could make it convenient to go

home to his lodging ; and in that case had not an opportunity of seeing many of the family. One of the daughters, with her companion, had their room close to the one in which he lay. After her first sleep, recollecting she had forgot to give the servants some instructions necessary to be executed before morning, she rose for that purpose, and soon discharged the business ; but in her way backward, by mistake, went to the captain's apartment, in place of her own. She lay by him for some time, without the least suspicion of having changed her companion ; but happening to reach her hand over his breast, she discovered her error, and, as much afraid as she was surpris'd, immediately leapt out of bed ; but he awakening, was equally alert, and in a moment securely locked her in his arms. Finding he was determined not to part with her easily, she address'd him with the utmost civility. My good Sir, I presume, from your profession, that you are a man of honour, and would not wish to expose a mistaken female to unmerited ridicule. I am under a contract of marriage, and my fate is to be decided by twelve to-morrow : Therefore, in case you do not desist, I shall cer-
tainly

tainly alarm the whole family. Well, says he, since such is the case, I shall comply with your request, on condition that you promise to make me your best man. She at once agreed to the proposal, obtained her liberty, and concealed her danger.

In the morning, upon his being introduced to the bride, she effectually shook his military bravery. Mr LOVE, that cunning engineer, immediately brought all his artillery to play, and laid a close siege to his heart. He was altogether charmed with her appearance, and her great good sense was equally captivating. He saw that no time was to be lost; therefore, like a skilful artificer, began his counter work, and considered all advantages as fair. The clergyman, when the party appeared, supposed all objections removed, and was proceeding to unite them, when the officer thus addressed her intended husband: You may think yourself at liberty to marry her, but I declare upon honour she was in bed with me last night. She blushed from ear to ear, and the whole family was in confusion. The bridegroom, without any inquiry into this mysterious business, takes his hat, and

swears she should never bed with him. Having been so far fortunate in getting rid of the chief metropolitan, he steps forward with these words: If my hand can be any compensation for what you have lost, it is quite ready for your reception. After a serious conversation on the subject, giving a minute detail of all the circumstances, and the cause that gave rise to his declaration, she learned the beauties of his character, accepted of his offer, and with mutual consent, they were instantly united. The sensible thoughts of the comedian are, in this singular case, somewhat applicable: "O marriage! happiest, easiest, safest state; let debauchees and drunkards, scorn thy rights, how can the savage call it loss of freedom, thus to converse with, thus to gaze at, a faithful, beauteous friend: Blush not, my fair one, that my love applauds thee; nor be it painful to be my wedded wife, that my full heart o'erflows in praise of thee. Thou art by law, by interest, and by passion mine: Passion and reason join in love of thee." And I take it for granted, that they lived quite happy, as I never heard the least rumour transpire to the contrary.

To

To speak in the style of common sense, away with what the world calls a pretty fellow, or a handsome female; let me have honour, and the continued virtues which regularly flow from a good heart;—these are the foundation on which matrimonial felicity can be erected, and erected with security.

Where these take root, affection will remain much longer than the honey month: love will not cloy with wedlock, nor lose its salutary influence by a nearer acquaintance. Mr Thomson, in his finished picture of hymeneal happiness, alike displays the ingenuity of the moralist, the painter, and the poet:—

“ O happy they! the happiest of their kind,
Whom gentler stars unite, and in one fate
Their hearts, their fortunes, and their beings blend.
’Tis not the coarser tie of human laws,
Unnatural oft, and foreign to the mind,
That binds their peace; but harmony itself,
Attuning all their passions into love;
Where friendship full exerts her softest power,
Perfect esteem, enlivened by desire
Ineffable, and sympathy of soul.
Thought meeting thought, and will preventing will,
With boundless confidence; For nought but love
Can

Can answer love, and render bliss secure,
 Let eastern tyrants, from the light of heaven
 Seclude their bosom slaves, meanly possess'd
 Of a mere lifeless, violated form :
 While those whom love cements in holy faith,
 And equal transport, free as nature live,
 Disdaining fear. What is the world to them,
 Its pomp, its pleasure, and its nonsense all !
 Who in each other clasp whatever fair
 High fancy forms, and lavish hearts can wish,
 Truth, goodness, honour, harmony, and love,
 The richest bounty of indulgent Heaven."

SPRING, p. 69 & 70.

The moralist observes, that only one sort of love is to be found, although he allows a thousand different copies of it. As a specimen of the first quality, a very affecting anecdote is related of a young woman in France, "who, after many difficulties, at last obtained her parents' consent of marrying one she sincerely loved ; but being to sign the instrument of contract, she had no sooner written the first letter of her name, than with the excess of joy, she fell into a fainting fit, from which she could never be recalled to life." What a valuable prize must her lover have lost ! and to him in particular, what a cloud of sorrow her death would occasion ! Goodness of heart,
 richly

richly adorned with the delicate feelings of affection, enchants all who perceive it, and well deserves to be styled the flower of beauty, which the pencil of the best artist cannot easily imitate, and but rarely, in its just features, express the original. Those eminently possessed of it, speak with their eyes, and being silent subdue.

To meet with a person qualified in the various significations of the word, to bear the sacred character of a friend, is a discovery not more rare than divine. Demosthenes called imposition in love, the witchcraft of affection. Leonado da Vinci, an Italian painter, was of opinion, that some sublime subjects are best described by negatives. Therefore he gives a delineation of false friendship, by an ivy thrusting down the wall on which it grew. Examples may easily be multiplied, in every age and country, to preserve the credit of this painter's negatives. But the genuine is not so easily defaced; like the good tree, it will prove its quality by the character of its fruit. The wintry blast of opposition will not obscure its fame, nor retard its progress. Perhaps the following relation may not be altogether out of season, it is a copy of singular benevolence.

nevolence. I must own I think the introduction highly over-strained, and a sacrifice to which very few, influenced by real affection, would ever have consented. But if the prologue is somewhat inconsistent, the catastrophe produces every event necessary to form as fine a picture of sincere affection, as ever was exhibited in dramatic dress. A young Roman repaired to Athens, to finish his education, reputed at that time one of the first seminaries of instruction, in that or any other country. Fate, which often acts with irresistible authority, and has a surprising power in forming connections, presented him, in a short time, with a companion deserving of his esteem, in the most extensive latitude. They soon became a principal topic of conversation; every eye beheld them with wonder, every tongue was lavish in their praise. As a phenomenon of this nature has commonly something in its progress out of the usual mode, we shall hasten to view the singular traits of this friendly painting. The Athenian had fixed his eyes on a female of merit and family. The partiality with which she was distinguished by virtue so conspicuous, and a character adorned with the first-rate abilities,

ties, as well as a combination of all the other beauties requisite to speak a polished mind, could not but be flattering : so that the increase of her affection kept pace with his own : so soon as the secret took wing, it was wafted abroad ; conversation caught the report, and accelerated its progress, in proportion to the prevailing element of affection or humour through which it passed. Circumstances were so favourably conducted, that all their acquaintances unanimously concluded their happiness sure, and fast ripening into enjoyment ; when a new event hastily started up, to change its direction, and to damp the joy of this so much wished for felicity. The Roman was all of a sudden seized with a complication of maladies, which seemed to prognosticate at least a raging fever, if not a more fatal consequence. Physicians were called, medicines applied, and proper nurses provided ; but his complaint seemed to have taken so firm a root, as to baffle the power of every application. The Athenian, who felt more on the occasion than the whole of his acquaintances, and who was scarcely a moment from his side, seeing him one day somewhat calm, and none but them-

selves

selves in the room, he turned the conversation to the symptoms of his disorder, and hinted that he thought them more of a mental, than of a bodily nature. He candidly replied, that the cause of his sickness ought to remain for ever a secret, as he knew the cure would not be obtained. He was of opinion, in a situation so critical, that concealment was necessary, and common prudence required it. My astonishment is great, and the sound I can scarcely credit : What ! says the Grecian, has our friendship all along been a bubble ? What have you ever seen in my conduct to give the least authority to all this distrust ? Is my sincere attachment treated with the ungenerous construction of hatred ? No sacrifice would I grudge, however costly, that could be the happy means of purchasing consolation, or of restoring your health. Pausing for a reply, after giving vent to a group of broken sighs, the expression stole from the Roman, as if expiring for want of confidence to utter it. " Your female friend," was all that his faltering tongue could pronounce. He looked at him, and seemed to be lost in silent tenderness ; but after an apparent struggle with his

his

his feelings, he thus spoke: Kind fate, direct me in this critical dilemma, both how to speak and act. If I gratify my own inclination, I lose my friend: If I relinquish her to whom I have already offered my hand, my honour shall be tarnished with a cloud of disgrace, and my name branded with lasting infamy: Well, let the world justify my conduct, or condemn me: let it say what it will, I am resolved to prolong your life; live, and she shall surely be yours. The preliminaries are already adjusted, and the day of our marriage is fixed. A proposal from you, at so late a period, might in reality be deemed an insult; and your hopes of happiness prove precarious, perhaps be for ever frustrated. I will marry, and you shall bed with her. Into her apartment I will convey you privately, and when the light is extinguished, return, and leave you to occupy my place; in hopes that Providence may so regulate matters, as that our rash enterprise may at least terminate in your happiness, whatever frowns of fortune I may have yet to encounter. The promise was made, with sincerity, and the engagement immediately performed. The light of the morning made a dis-

covery, not more new than unexpected. Her amazement was so great, that she could scarcely credit her own eyes; to make an apology, or proposals of reconciliation, was but labour in vain. She soon left him to ruminate on the rash part he had acted; and went to consult her parents, how to regulate herself, and what she should resolve on. After the first gust of passion was in some measure subdued, and reason began to resume its empire, they, as well as herself, thought it the best policy to wink at, or at least appear passive in respect of all that had passed; and, as the next creditable step, agreed that they should also be married. A train so favourable, unlocked the Athenian, and made him venture once more to show them his face. Rather out of compliment to the Roman, than any regard they had for himself, they seemed to treat him with their usual politeness; and in appearance he shined as formerly in their kindness. But so soon as the married couple departed, and went home to Rome, he felt the effect of their resentment: her relations could no longer conceal their spleen; a confiscation of all his property immediately took place. His name was erased from
their

their public records; and they passed a decree, in which he was banished for ever from the city. Not knowing where to direct his steps, he wandered from place to place, till his dress had almost lost its colour, as well as his character its credit. One day musing on past transactions, all at once he awakens from his dream of uncertain peregrination. Was it for nothing I made a conquest of my affection? Shall not he for whom I lost my all, meet me with the face of a friend? let me at least make a trial.—His courage supported him very well on his journey, till he reached the suburbs of the city; but the moment he entered Rome, and understood the rank and dignity to which his friend was raised, reflections on his own misconduct stared him in the face, and damped the ardour of his resolution. The eye of him who had beheld his better days, and seen him basking in the sun-shine of fortune, he could not bear to encounter in the weeds of a pilgrim. Entertaining no concern from the danger of wild beasts, or the fear of famine, he formed a hasty resolution, of retiring to the woods, and concealing himself from the eye of the world; for life was already become a burden.

He only proceeded a short way, when he was violently assailed with furious winds and rain ; but kind Providence had not yet deserted him : a hospitable cove appeared in view, which seemed to encourage and invite him to take shelter under its generous roof. Fatigue and anxiety soon drew the curtain of repose over his weary eyelids ; and that rest, which often forsakes the bed of down, lent him its salutary enjoyment, in his solitary habitation.

The brightening beams of day had scarcely begun to smile, when the echo of an alarm resounded from every corner of his lonely grotto. The steps of the traveller had been hastily interrupted by the view of a mangled body, which had fallen a victim to the savage hand of some degenerate heart. Suspecting, from his appearance and situation, this barbarous action to be the consequence of his lawless exertion, he is charged with the horrid murder, and has nothing to offer in his own defence. No opposition being given, he is thought to have freely acknowledged himself the perpetrator of this cruel act, and consequently soon lodged in a situation, destined to contain characters of coarser feelings, and of
much

much more depraved morals, than his own. When he was brought before the judges, however, he was soon recognised by one of them; his former friend who plainly perceived strong traces of his old companion in his countenance, asked his name, and if ever he had been at Athens. He answered in the affirmative. The judge, without any further ceremony, threw off his gown, placed himself close by his side, and declared himself the delinquent. A serious altercation took place, and the contention was maintained with determined firmness. The whole court, quite astonished, appointed them different apartments, till some inquiry should be made into this dark chapter of accidents. Remorse seized the real criminal, when the noise of this singular relation reached his ear; and even though at a distance from the seat of justice, he appears there upon the next day of trial. Each of the other two still adhered to the point they had formerly advanced. But this third person places the case in a quite different position; as well as in colours much more natural. The candid strain of his address soon commanded attention, while he thus spoke: These men can

in no form come under the description of aggressors. He then sincerely wished the same tone of justification could be applied to himself. But he would by no means attempt to extenuate either his disgrace, or his guilt. He declared that he could not endure the thought, that two innocent persons should suffer either accusation, or punishment, for what he alone had committed. He then acknowledged the atrociousness of his crime, and that it was at variance with the laws of God, contrary to every feeling of humanity; and that all such criminals were not only a reproach to the name of man, a dishonour to their relations and country, but were also left a prey to endless misery. He still further observed, that the intestine wars occasioned by such outrageous breaches of justice, and the sacred obligations which are the bond of union in all civilized nations, or well regulated societies, was always followed by an incurable disease. Therefore, without the least equivocation, he would settle the gloomy business before them, by the only amendment then in his power, which was a free confession of his guilt, and a sacrifice of himself to justice. His criminal conduct deserved

ved the severest punishment, and he felt a remorse much more poignant than any one else could paint or describe. Whatever degree of severity the judges, in their wisdom, might see proper to inflict, he would strive to bear with becoming resignation; a duty which is laudable, when conscience supports the mind, and pleads freedom from the charge of depravity; but nowise meritorious when loaded with accumulated accusations of guilt. The generous open manner of the offender excited universal compassion; he soon felt the effect of their clemency, for the prevailing voice cried for a pardon; which was granted without hesitation. The innocence of the other two being sufficiently testified, they were dismissed with a degree of astonishment, bordering on veneration. The judge takes his friend into a private family, where they were at liberty to enjoy themselves. He insisted on a true relation of all his misfortunes, since the time of their separation: and so soon as he finished his narration, said to him, My good friend, how much am I indebted to you? and how much do I still owe you? I shall lay all ceremony aside, and show that I am not quite ungrateful.

ungrateful. I have a sister, whom I will venture to recommend as a wife. Should her person and manner gratify your taste, I promise that every other consideration shall be made agreeable to you ; for you shall share in my fortune and friendship, while I live. This Roman female possessed extraordinary merit ; and, upon the whole, it was thought he had gained much by the exchange. Their remaining days were uncommonly fortunate, and continued to shine with the rays of unbroken felicity.

The opinion of those distinguished by taste and discernment, respecting women as well as other objects, will always bear reflection. Though every sound deserves not to be set to music, the following sensible quotation requires no apology : “ A female of merit, whose mind is improved by a virtuous and refined education, retains, in her declining years, an influence over the men more effectual, than ever she acquired by her beauty : she is then the delight of her friends, as much as she was formerly that of her admirers : for a respectable character is a flower which we cultivate for its scent or beauty, one of the graces of nature, one of the objects which

which beautify the creation, admired by all men in all ages, which our fathers valued, and which we after them likewise esteem." How stately does female elegance appear, when it comes forward adorned with the rich colours, neat attire, and polished strokes of the historian; or, when described by the no less expressive pencil, and beautiful delineations of the poet. The united efforts of these painters give such a glow of animation to the whole picture, as to make the reader almost wish for a sight of the original character: What a beautiful encomium, how simple, unaffected, and laconic, is that which was made on Phocion's wife: "She first arrayed herself in meekness and temperance, and then put on whatever more was necessary." The character of Pliny's wife is likewise comprehensive, and briefly expressed; who was said to be "the best of wives, and the best beloved." The representation is natural, easy, and divine. The idea these convey will require no dictionary to explain; the construction is quite obvious. Sincerity of heart, and simplicity of outward appearance, are the ornamental habit of her who deserves to be taken notice of. "Solomon, who
had

had made the tour of the fashionable world, complains, (Ecclef. vii. 28.), "that one man among a thousand he had found, but a woman in all that number he found not." I suspect much, when he uttered this harsh expression, he had been too often conversant with women of inferior worth, and therefore seldom met with any heroine of sterling merit, who loved virtue too sincerely, to sacrifice it for a shadow; and admired a good name more than his dazzling grandeur. Were he to appear in our age, how much would he seem surprised, to find many of our females so far superior to those of his time. The treasure of genuine virtue, and the flow of disinterested benevolence, is not the production of every soil, nor the principal feature of every character; but I know one whose life and manners brighten to the view, like the cheerful smiling sun, whose merit requires no panegyric; who is singular in every moral virtue; whose heart will melt with tenderness, and shed the tear of sympathy for sorrows not her own; whose silent sense and modesty utter a thousand beauties; whose very looks are expressive of purity. - I could name her, who,
when

when others were folded in the arms of sleep, or spending their morning-hours in adjusting their dress, and trifling away time at their toilet,—has been diligently engaged in a different employment, and has been ready to share with others the fruit of her labour; liberally supplying the poor, and reaching her bread to the needy. Models of this kind have been found in palaces, and examples worthy of imitation seen in a cottage; so that we can neither fix on rank in life as the standard of excellence, nor look for genuine goodness for ever in low stations. A plebeianess, who, under many disadvantages, should maintain elegance in her manner, judgment in her taste, and virtue in all her actions, would surely deserve to be saluted as the morning star; and no good heart would ever envy her success in the world, however eminent the station to which she might be raised. *Sempronîa* had been much distinguished by the liberal gifts of fortune, besides high birth, genteel education, and engaging wit; she was also in possession of (what the giddy and thoughtless would value more than the generous endowments of modesty), incomparable beauty: yet these
were.

were no screen of protection, when the gloomy messenger of terror arose in haste to salute her. Why heaves her breast? what robs her of her gaiety? When languishing on a death-bed, does she read with joy each day's successive improvement? Does her sun look bright at its setting? Is the curtain every where embellished with the pleasing beams, in which former years were clad? Does the part she has acted exhibit the representation of a rich landscape, under loaded increase in every direction, and sweetly perfumed with fragrant flowers? Ah! behold her looking back with a blushing countenance on the false evanescent scene! when the tide of vice ran high, when depravity rushed on with impetuosity, and vanity rolled on vanity. See the gloomy spectre of awakened crimes, angry, sulky, stalking in sad and sable robes! What may we suppose the tone of her thoughts, at the closing period of life? "Happy those who fed their minds with Virtue's conscious dignity." Nearer the apparition then approaches, reaves from her the hopes of future fame, and gives the deadly blow. How different the colours of life, in the character of the virtuous female, and her who has

fled from decency. What a degree of sincere affection, and moral refinement will naturally command, when nicely connected with the beauties of virtue. What an affecting picture do we see in the description of Virginia: her tragical conclusion in the cause of virtue, one would imagine, might soften even the heart of a savage; and draw tears from eyes unaccustomed to weep. What feeling heart, in possession of the least spark of humanity, could behold, unmoved, an innocent female, in the blooming graces of youth, struggling to preserve her honour unfulfilled, despising the wealth and power of a Decemvir, while her virtue and fame were in jeopardy!

This angel-form, though ever loaded with a burden of sorrow, appears with surprising dignity. Her beams were heavenly, and might have been expected to shine long, with unclouded lustre; but, ah! how dark and gloomy the scene is become! See her fair bosom swelling with killing and unmerited pain. That innocence that needs not fear any eye, nor dread the glare of day; that great guardian of virtue, in this disgraceful case, finds neither credit nor

L compassion.

compassion. Like a menial slave, this treasure of virtue, is led to the forum. There the unrighteous judge had already appeared, and what was to be expected from a wretch who had laid his conscience asleep, and, as a slave to infamy, had already devoted this unfortunate maid to ruin. Who could behold her in such imminent danger, and remain callous? Who could look at her face, and observe her eye overflow with the tears of distress, like rolling waves chasing each other, where formerly pure affection darted its enlivening beam,—and not sincerely regret the transformation of the scene? “The glowing sympathy that feels, and kindly speaks the accents of the heart,” could not but share in her sufferings, and sorely lament to see virtue so conspicuous so cruelly oppressed. But as the infamous name of Appius must excite universal abhorrence, to dwell longer on this uncommon catastrophe, can be no pleasant task to any person tinctured with the least colour of humanity.

Having no particular characters in view in these delineations, and no other design than to represent the distinction which genuine virtue ought

ought to introduce, instead of pretending to a corresponding key, or looking for a character to whom the imputation may belong, it is best, in every case, to take care not to deserve the first, and pray to God, that a copy of the last may not be seen in our days, nor ever acted in our land.

“A good name,” says the great King of Israel, “is better than precious ointment.” The voice of fame surely deserves respect, and solid judgment will always think so. Regularity of conduct, or consistency of sentiment, can seldom arise, and will never continue long on a false foundation: neither shall deceiving colours maintain the credit of reality for any length of time. Envy, with low designs, too often finds a secret pleasure in eclipsing the lustre it cannot reach; but however artfully the dagger of detraction may be directed, it will generally miss its aim, if truth forms no part of the accusation. In the sober breast, justice erects its throne, where, next to the approbation of an all-seeing eye, conscience occupies the character of a judge. In vain shall the world acquit, when criminality is the result of its decision; and if the inward

monitor freely absolve, the false sentence which the tongue of malice may uncharitably pass, ought to sit very easy. On the female of character many gaze, not with a design to copy her elegance, but to search for imperfections : and the fewer of these they discover, the more secure will her beauty remain ; but the greater is their disappointment. Mankind, in a body, are not easily imposed upon ; and the fame which discretion, or an amiable line of conduct, never fails to establish, will always bear an inspection, and always continue in estimation. But the female who considers the public opinion as a matter of speculation or indifference, must have departed a great way from the path of common sense. A pane of glass, when once broken, can never be cemented, so as not to offend the eye, or escape discernment. It is much better to wear a meagre name, than an wounded virtue. Should a character have the misfortune to suffer from false aspersions, while innocence remains unshaken, it will soon have its resurrection and credit ; spring up, with unwithered bloom, in its genuine vigour ; and when once the reproachful clouds are scattered, its lustre, instead
of

of fading from an unmerited eclipse, will rather reach the meridian of beauty. "One hour changed the fetters of Joseph into a chain of gold; and he was honoured with the second chariot in Egypt!" Good offices torment malice, much more than any other kind of revenge; for when ill-designed persons are once able to throw their opponent off the hinges of discretion, then they are quite in their element, let tart words fall, and set inquiry at work; but by bearing the storm patiently, the arrows of premeditated ruin will at last recoil on those who discharged them, without any injury to the person against whom they were directed. Having slipped away rather abruptly from the allusion to the pane of glass, I shall here give it another glance. The female character is equally delicate, and liable, when a flaw is visible, to the same rules of criticism: like the bite of the tarantula, it can never be cured. Therefore sterling reputation is truly no small ornament. Men of the most dissipated morals cannot always support their own theory, at the expence of goodness; nor refuse their secret tribute of respect to the female of finished qualifications; nor is

the heart of any so wicked, as to consider virtue in reality as a piece of useless furniture ; however much in their own vicious practice they may affect to despise it. The amiable female, who has given strong and repeated proofs of a correct taste, and a steady uniformity of morals, who blushes not at the unfashionable epithets of piety and religion, nor is ashamed to be ranked in the antiquated number of those who will not lay aside such ornaments, for the sneer of ridicule, or the laugh of the profligate, carries in her possession a face of durable beauty, and a shield of invincible security.

How ungenerous to reproach a female, when we ought to admire her virtues. But it is a self-evident truth, that uncommon discretion, or beauty of mind, is an open insult to inferior or hypocritical characters. When those who have undervalued themselves by impropriety of conduct, view the competition as beyond their reach, and plainly observe, that their own name and fame cannot procure them the same respect, nor rise to the same standard of excellence. The consequence is, that they contemplate the female of merit, with the spiteful eye of envy ;
and

and that only for possessing advantages which seem to place their own folly so much in view. Therefore, they seldom fail to watch narrowly, and if they find the least flaw, they soon pester the world with the publication of it ; and the fruit of their industry is usually attended with large commentary notes, calculated either to divert the attention of others from the inconsistency of their own conduct, or, if possible, to reduce a model of distinguished qualities to the same level with themselves. But these are glaring frailties, which carry in their train a strong tincture of spleen, without the least mixture of charity, emulation, or refinement. To the female desirous of supporting a fair reputation, discretion would dictate to see such but seldom, and neither to covet their spirit, nor excite their malice. Those who interest themselves in failings, for which they are not to answer, tarnish the lustre of that humanity to which they might lay claim, if self-diffidence was a little more natural to them. Many, in delineating the character of their acquaintances, give the picture all the dark colours of revenge, without a single shade of compassion, or Christian charity. The reflection,

that

that probably they may have greater infirmities of their own to rectify, is removed from their recollection, as a thought they do not chuse to entertain. But it would not be amiss for those who are influenced by this humour, to consider, at the time when they are wantonly circulating their invectives, very likely on innocence, that by such unpolite, inelegant descriptions, the complexion of their own hearts is less or more exposed to view. If those who are so very fond of censure could be persuaded to dwell more at home, probably the faults of others would not entertain them so highly : for if we expect the screen of clemency, as a covering to our own imperfections, it is necessary to look with an eye of sympathy on those of others. These lessons of benevolence, if well learned, and regularly digested, are all calculated to promote respect, and procure happiness. The female of discretion will know all this; and therefore, if the failings of her acquaintances come under the eye of her inspection, she will make them a copy of instruction to refine upon, and not a subject of criticism to declaim against. She shows herself the Christian by her language, as well as by her practice.

practice. She raises herself to respect; but it is by humanity and virtue, not by depreciating the character of others. In every circle, a female, on her first appearance, has her accomplishments called in question; her merit hastily, and often uncandidly decided; proportionable to the taste or disposition of the party, or the illiberal sentiments of the rash critic, who aspires at the privilege of a judge, and passes sentence with a tone of assurance, equal to the Grand Seigneur, or as if he himself were absolutely perfect. Even in this age of refinement, every female, desirous to maintain an unblemished character, will find that caution is not become an obsolete term, but is fully as necessary now as it was in preceding periods. A modest engaging manner, a meek humane heart, in connection with a ripe understanding, though the richest of jewels, (experience may convince us), do not always prove that rock of security, or lasting refuge, that ignorance of mankind, or of the world, seem ready or willing to admit. Ungenerous criticisms too often borrow their authority from deliberate mischief, and extend their fatal influence with the cruelty of savages. This dangerous

gerous spirit, or poverty of morals, is not found in the volume of charity,—but in the book of ill-nature; and, according to its Pagan text, human nature is at times examined, not with any grains of allowance for the imperfections incident to mortals, but rather as if they ought to possess the perfection of angels. Should a female regulate her conduct by the rules of reserve, seem distant and cautious, the epithet prude is liberally bestowed on her; if she is agreeable, open, and unaffected, the imputation of levity is pronounced, with equal impropriety. It were to be wished, this censorious fashion would effectually cease, and that proper encouragement were given to habits of plain honesty.

I shall suppose the scene of action, for the following narration, in the island of Man; but whether it is merely an ideal picture, or the materials of real occurrences, conducted by the irresistible authority of a divine hand, I will by no means take upon me to determine. Positively to fix the signature of Truth, to actions related in the style of romance, would be highly improper, and far from treating that venerable figure with the respect due to its dignity. Though I
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do not recollect to have found any traces of the following story, in either history or novels, yet I must acknowledge I have heard something that bore a strong resemblance to the principal characters; but if its physiognomy has not undergone a complete repair, it has at least the credit of a modern dress. Allowing it to be nothing else but the child of fancy, pernicious consequences cannot possibly ensue from a desire of refining on mental beauty: for if the moral it inculcates reflects the least credit on the interest of virtue, or gives vice that degrading aspect which tends to produce distaste, and prevent imitation, the painting cannot be detrimental to either law or gospel.

Peel is one of the towns in Man. And what though we should make Mr Griffin one of the principal characters in this relation, with an estate well cultivated, and free from all incumbrances. And what if we should also suppose the old man, his father, lingering on a death-bed, and quite emaciated, calling his only son before him to receive his last blessing and counsel, and addressing him in a strain similar to the following: "My son, listen to the voice of instruction. Did
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you ever hear an orator treat his subject in a more pathetic style, than the expressive eloquence of agitation, sickness, and death? The end of all motion is rest : the end of life is death. The sun rejoiceth in his progress, and so does man in his strength ; but his strength continueth not. He flourishes for a while, and then vanisheth for ever. Eternity is a pleasing prospect ; but what makes it so ? only the reflection of a well-spent life. Therefore, my son, if you wish to triumph over the fear of dissolution, and to be put in possession of invariable happiness, at the close of that important period, let sincerity direct your devotion, and constant attention to equity characterise your actions ; let love to God, and benevolence to men, comprehend the signification, and exemplify your belief of the soundest articles of Christian faith. To fly in the face of every sacred obligation, is impiety in its most glaring colours ; and exultation in such conduct exhibits a picture too dark to deserve approbation : a picture which few could have the insolence to recommend. Those who give fugitive shadows the place of solid substances, or vaguely imagine that the refuse of their
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days, or the dregs of their years, is a fit offering for their Maker, make an exceedingly unjust calculation of the business. The beautiful colours, and engaging features, of him who is ripe in divine improvement, is a mark of distinction worthy of unfading laurels ; and which can scarcely be heightened, unless it be by a contrast with him who is grown old in sin. Agreeable to the system of learned sages, an honest man (while ostentation is suppressed) will gain more by letting the world see him as he is, than by striving to appear what he is not. Boasting is always thought to proceed from ignorance of the world, and on that account is considered as a defect in politeness. Xenophon says, that praises have a very musical and charming accent from the mouth of another, but are very flat and untunable when they terminate in self-exaltation. Profit or pleasure is the ruling principle, or animating power of all our pursuits. We all know, that whatever is least attended with feelings of remorse, or grounds of repentance, must claim the closest connection with happiness : a command of temper, united with virtue and integrity, possesses this inherent quality, and

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therefore the cultivation of it is not only commendable, but absolutely necessary. Pyrrhus, a famous fencing-master, "when any scholar came to learn his art, proposed, for the first lesson, to subdue himself; for Anger, he observed, would look where to strike, but not where to defend." Among other judicious instructions, we may naturally suppose, that the matrimonial connection would be recommended, and the character of the female from whom the greatest share of happiness might be expected described. Taste bears a significant emphasis, and ought to be the predominant principle in an engagement of so much importance. Both the heart and eye should have fair play; because a gratification from any other consideration than that of sincere affection, can afford only a precarious prospect of happiness; for forced love can produce no pleasing effect. The same sincerity that directs the tongue of candor to speak kind language, will engage the heart of humanity to gratify the hopes it has raised. The scriptures strongly recommend to follow peace with all the world. The mode in which you may best acquit yourself, in the different relations of life, is clearly
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and beautifully delineated in the expressive pages of inspiration. And the divine oracles are by far the best commentary you can consult, in regard to your duty. My son, this is all I am able to speak,—may God be your friend.—I bid you adieu.”

The son effectually discharged his duty to the remains of a kind and affectionate parent, and in every respect conducted himself with a degree of decorum suitable to the occasion. After sorrow had begun to abate its first gloom, in order to regain his former cheerfulness, he resolved to give some of his acquaintances a call. A respectable family, of the name of Manlius, had the honour of his first visit. Mr Manlius was a gentleman of a pleasant manner, frank and facetious, with whom he had long lived on a very friendly and familiar footing. Having discoursed upon various topics, marriage at length became the subject of their conversation. Mr Griffin argued much in favour of a voluntary compact. He hinted, that arbitrary or compulsive measures might very well become the character of slaves ; but, in a free state, was quite inconsistent with the independent spirit of virtue. He thought

freedom of choice should always be allowed, unless a ridiculous inclination made the connection a matter of ridicule. In that case, he thought it requisite, and consistent with sound policy, to make use of every innocent stratagem that could tend to divert the progress of an affection that prognosticated misery in every view. He then ended his harangue with a short comment on the beauty and good breeding of his friend's daughters. To two of my girls, says the father, I intend giving a fortune; but as for the youngest, I mean to act contrary to the articles of your creed; for whoever makes choice of her must pay me down eleven hundred pounds.

A demand so singular excited his curiosity. He had been acquainted with her before, and therefore required no great time to prove her quality. He found her behaviour and good sense, in every point, equal to her appearance. The money he made no scruple to pay; for he plainly saw she was a jewel of inestimable value. After settling these premises with the father, he went to acquaint the young lady with this extraordinary transaction. He modestly intimated, that he had made a purchase of her; but told
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her at the same time, that, notwithstanding of what had happened, he was resolved to take no advantage of her inclination: And so far from insisting on the fulfilling of this engagement, or laying the least restraint upon her taste, he informed her, that from that moment she was at liberty to chuse for herself. She politely thanked him for his partiality; and added, that whatever clouds might often concur to eclipse the lustre of sincere affection in such circumstances, on her side no remaining gloom darkened the prospect, had any traces of existence, nor was the information in the least disagreeable to her. She still further observed, that she had but one heart and one face, and these she would give him along with her hand, without the least hesitation, whenever he pleased to make the demand. Taking her at her word, the minister was sent for, and they were immediately made happy. Her lustre, like the morning star, dazzled all around. Her many virtues daily gained credit, and increased in beauty. But an unhappy accident drew the curtain of unexpected disaster, over the fair prospect of their prosperity, and

nupt hastily in the bud, all the flowers of their future joy.

A captain, of the name of *Dark-craft*, had anchored his ship at no great distance from this elegant dome, where virtue sat smiling in every corner, and wore the garb of felicity every hour of the day. A wintry blast unfortunately wafted him aboard. The captain and he began freely to taste the juice of the vine. The jovial glass went briskly around; and as the liquor began to operate, it gave their tongues an additional volubility. Mr Griffin, as he might with great propriety, enlarged handsomely on the various endowments of his valuable partner. But the captain said he suspected much the extravagance of his estimation; and to give plausibility to his suggestion, he had recourse to natural similitudes. The silver and dross are not discriminated, he observed, till they undergo an experiment in the refiner's furnace; by the same rule, virtue untried cannot claim the honour of being genuine. The other assured him, that he was perfectly convinced of his wife's fidelity; and would not hesitate a moment to pledge his estate against his ship and cargo, that he would find

find from any experiment he chose to make, the representation noway exaggerated. The captain took him at his word, and a legal bond was immediately written, and signed before witnesses, by both parties. Mr Griffin was to remain on board till the time agreed upon for the execution of the plot should expire, without giving the least instruction to his wife, or divulging the secret. The captain declared, he would cheerfully fulfil his part of the engagement, if in two days he did not accomplish his point. Money, which is but too ready in every country to procure accomplices in the cause of vice, was not without influence in this transaction. He soon found ways and means to gain the good opinion of Mrs Griffin's nurse: *Sly-cut* was not very squeamish in her principles, being one of those creatures that would do any thing for pelf. She began her attack with gross equivocation, made her believe that one of her friends had found a chest with blankets on the shore, and alledged, that it could not in the least seem a matter of surprise, that, in case of a search, she thought it would be perfectly secure, with a character of her consequence; and declared, that she would
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esteem the indulgence a particular favour, if she would suffer it to remain in her bed-room for one night. Suspecting no colour of treachery, this amiable character at once gave her consent to the proposal; and, under the darkness of night, this nest of mischief was conveyed to her apartment. A hole was made opposite to his eye, where he might take his observations; and an inside lock, that he could open at pleasure, gave him every necessary security.

At the proper hour of rest, this virtuous beauty kneeled before her God, to express her gratitude, and implore the continuation of his mercy. After having finished her devotion, she began to undress; and this monster of iniquity was all attention. The visible mark of a key on her breast, which was a figure very uncommon, surprised him less than her bright appearance, and composed manner. Before she lay down, he saw her take a purse from her pocket, and put it into a chest of drawers; a prize which this demon of mischief looked upon as already in his clutches. So soon as he found this patroness of virtue safely ashore on the land of rest, he stole from his detestable cabin, to look
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for plunder: He searched the drawers, and soon secured whatever he found answerable to his purpose; but when her profile and purse fell into his unhallowed hands, he quietly retired to his lurking place, having enough for his purpose in possession. At the dawn of day, the chest was removed, and this ravenous wolf once more set at liberty. Exulting in his wickedness, he hastened aboard, and boasted of favours he could never have obtained: declared he had made great progress in the science of astronomy, and expected he would admit his practice of astrology, from the shape of the key on his wife's breast. He appealed to himself, if that discovery was not a sufficient proof, that he stood secure in her favour. The other objected to it as a piece of information he might easily acquire, without the least acquaintance with her. Producing her profile and purse, I hope then this will convince you of my conquest; as being *argumentum ad feminam*; and added, that she was much pleased with his company, and wished him to repeat his visits as often as he could make it convenient. The poor infatuated husband could not resist the evidence, but swallowed this doctrine without

without the smallest doubt. He acted no part of the prudent, honest, and ingenuous husband: for, without mentioning the matter to his wife, or giving her the least hint of his suspicion, like a poor filly fool, he delivers his charter to the captain, and into the truth of his report made no further inquiry. He applied to this ragamuffin for some of his hands, who got ready at command, when the business was clearly understood; for he was shaking with fear, lest by some accident his villany should be discovered. Having made all things snug, Mrs Griffin's consent was soon obtained, to accompany them to what she thought a party of pleasure; but it was a cruel stratagem that hastened her steps into complicated misery. They made away with her from the land, and reaching a barren rock at some distance from shore, left her alone, to make her complaint to the wilds and waves. Her tears and entreaties were entirely fruitless, and had no effect on the inhuman savages, to whom her landing was intrusted. She was scarcely an hour in this unpleasant situation, however, when she saw a ship in full sail, coming near to the place where she was; and
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kind Providence, which often works miracles in critical moments, soon appeared to alleviate her calamity, and to convert her darkness into light. A hoop, which the rolling wave, in compassion for her distress, drove within her reach, was employed, with her handkerchief at one end of it, as a signal of distress; and her little flag was soon observed. The captain, whose name was *Titus Fairline*, was by no means destitute of virtue or humanity, and therefore sent his boat and hands immediately to her relief; and bore close to the wind, till she was safely brought aboard. The honest tars, without the least colour of charity, (as the account she gave of herself was not altogether satisfactory), concluded, that she was only a fashionable woman of the town, who having committed some *faux paux*, had been left upon that account, and not for the building of a church. As soon as her tears had ceased to flow, the captain, who supposed them to have proceeded from the danger she was in, rather than from a sense of injured innocence, or any delicacy of sentiment she might possess, began to make proposals, quite too indelicate for the modest ear of his female passenger.

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She seemed to bear them with some degree of patience, till he forgot that decency of language, and that measure of respect, which virtue, conscious of its dignity, naturally expects ; but then she thought it perfectly requisite to assume a little courage, and address him with becoming firmness. “ Sir, you seem to be very well versed in the rudiments of raillery ; but such language as yours, like wild birds notes, can never be brought to any regular music. Theophrastus the poet observes, that it is a great burden to a lover of prattle to hold his tongue ; but to speak without the least shadow of wit or common sense, must be equally burdensome to his company. Obscene language is a breach of politeness, shocks reason, and destroys morality. It is true, the situation in which you found me might give countenance to various conjectures. To figures any way uncommon, either in the heavens, or on the earth, people are ready to annex what meaning they please. Human actions, which admit of the least suspicion, are often blackened with an erroneous construction, and the colours given them by him who attempts to unravel their mysterious parts, shew less or more of his

own disposition. I am truly sensible that, as my deliverer, I owe you many obligations. But if you suppose or expect that I am to repay this act of humanity at the expence of my honour and virtue, you will find yourself much mistaken. I shall not hesitate one moment to execute the part of Lucretia, if you persist in measures so destructive to the peace of my mind. It is true, I am in your power ; but if you offer to abuse that power, you must answer at the bar of God, for such a complication of cruelties. Be not surprised at the boldness of my language : for severity, at times, is absolutely necessary, to guard honest women from irreparable injury ; not only as you use your lead to guard you against false soundings, but as veneration doth sacred things, which often deters the most daring of men from treating steady virtue with insolence.

To the slaves of vice, contemplations of genuine refinement are seldom familiar. All those figures which are written out in the language of folly, or which immorality records in the mind, tend to produce cloudy reflections ; and the premiums they bestow, are only the blushes

of shame. Suffer me further to repeat the words of a great poet and a Christian :

“Aspiring youth,
Strive to resist the fyren voice of vice,
Let none of her enchantments draw thee on
To guiltful shores, nor meads of fatal joy.
When wisdom prostrate lies, the foolish soul
Is wrapt in visions of unreal bliss;
And fading fame dissolves in air away :
Then 'tis too late to seize the prize of virtue.”

The captain, finding a different character from what he expected, immediately altered his tone ; and began to treat her with all the politeness of which he was master. From his mild and agreeable manner, she was made to believe, she had nothing further to fear from him : And he made such handsome apologies for his rude behaviour, as were sufficient to convince her, that he was neither destitute of sound sense nor humanity. He told her, though his curiosity was so much awakened, that it would have been more than an ordinary gratification, to have been favoured with her real history, still he wished for no part of it which required a veil. And though he had no desire to purchase infor-

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mation at the expence of creating pain to another ; yet he would thank her for a candid reply to one single question, viz. If ever she was married, or if her husband was in life ? to which she answered in the affirmative. When he understood she had no money, he took the opportunity, when she was upon deck, of writing a card, in which he inclosed twelve guineas, wrapped it up in a pound of tea, and, when just going ashore, insisted she would accept of it, and examine its contents when she was at leisure : which she accordingly did, and unexpectedly found herself mistress of a very great treasure. Her heart swelled with joy and gratitude ; and, in her prayers to Heaven, the happiness of her generous benefactor was sincerely remembered. She soon got herself neatly equipped in a male dress, which she supposed would prove a greater security to her than her own. Having travelled so far into the country, that no report with regard to herself could easily overtake her, she began to inquire for a master, and was soon received into the service of Lord G——. Being possessed of the best of breeding, and exceedingly handsome, she was

soon noticed, and of consequence brought to attend the table. After she had been some time in the family, Lady G—— began to eye young Blyth-fame, which was the name she gave herself, as a much greater favourite than a servant. Having taken the advantage of Lord G——'s absence, she began with proposals which required categorical answers, and were fully as plain as they were pleasant. Blyth-fame, at first, acted as if the language had been unintelligible, and the signals displayed above her capacity to comprehend. There is a visible modesty or bashfulness, which commonly accompanies honest women: those who weigh their thoughts and manner in the scale of discretion, are easily known; and by the reverse of the same proposition, the conduct of this Amarilles spoke a glaring deficiency in the laws of virtue and common prudence; for she seemed to have held in contempt every colour of modesty. Blyth-fame, after conquering this gale of surprise, addressed her in a style as unexpected as it was seasonable: "The tenderness of Lord G—— to you, upon every occasion, merits a return the very reverse of your conduct to-day. Think
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of him this moment as your husband ; think of him as he deserves ; and I am persuaded, you will blush at the thought of acting a part so ungenerous, so inconsistent with the dignity which a character of your consequence ought to maintain, and with the homage to which affection like his, is truly entitled. Without honour and mutual kindness, family-happiness cannot rise to respect, nor continue long to subsist ; and the fruit of these venerable virtues is as much esteemed by every honest heart, as treachery, or yielding to every temptation, is detestable and base. We are sure that it is not the spinning, nor the quirkling of a syllogism, that gives any weight to an argument, or any beauty to a character in the presence of our God. No interest is equal to that of sincerity, for gaining his approbation ; and if we would preserve the affection of those with whom we are any way familiar, the same argument still holds good : for it is only by close application to the laws of virtue, and by mild generous offices, that we can hope for success. Therefore let me recommend to your perusal, the advice of Polonius in Hamlet,

“The friend thou hast, and his adoption tried,
Grapple him to thy soul with hoops of steel.”

It is a great misfortune, when rank neglects that Patrician spirit of refinement, which is the true, and ought to be the distinguishing ornament of dignity. For it is lamentable enough, when birth, and a conspicuous station, look down with a careless eye on moral beauties, or consider virtue and decency as a ceremony they may easily step over. Though pupils of this degrading class have appeared in every age, and will no doubt continue so to do till the end of the chapter, *that* does not in the least extenuate the folly, nor justify the practice. And every sensible person will readily allow, that the less such models are copied, so much the better. It is surely a delightful prospect to see emulation prevail among all ranks, in venerating the sacred bond of affection, which unites mankind in the various relations in which they stand to each other; and those who revere every link, calculated to maintain its usefulness and beauty unblemished, merit the regard of Heaven, and the admiration of the world around them.

I might easily multiply examples, from the annals of different nations, of characters whose memory and virtuous actions, were deservedly extolled and immortalised by the historians of their age and country.

Suffer me to repeat an extraordinary report sent to the Emperor of China : “ Agreeable to the order of your Majesty, for erecting monuments to the honour of women, who have been celebrated for their continency, filial piety, or purity of manners, the vicèroy of Canton reports, that, in the town of Sinhvei, a beautiful young woman, named Leang, sacrificed herself to save her virtue. In the 15th year of our Emperor Canghi, she was dragged by pirates into their ship; and having no other way to escape their barbarity, she threw herself headlong into the sea, being impelled by a momentary impulse of preferring honour and virtue to life itself. We purpose, according to your Majesty’s order, to erect a triumphal arch for that young woman, and to engrave her story upon it, that it may be preserved in perpetual remembrance.” I now conclude this plain honest exhortation, by no other apology, than
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assuring you, that, if you have judgement enough to keep your own secret, I shall never be the trumpeter of your folly ; providing you give me no further trouble upon this score." Notwithstanding of this friendly counsel, Lord G—— no sooner reached home, than Blyth-fame had her character blackened by the foulest aspersions. Colours of depravity were easily borrowed from an over-heated imagination, to make her name and dress appear perfectly awkward. The nobleman, quite enraged, thought even hanging too lenient a punishment. She was soon lodged in a gloomy apartment, that perhaps never had the honour of such a guest. The result of her trial was *banishment for life*. She wrote a letter with her own hand to Lord G——, pleaded genteelly for a personal interview, insisted much that he would condescend to visit her, with two trusty witnesses ; and engaged to produce such proofs of innocence, as he himself would readily admit. The solicitation was penned with such effectual arguments, as would have moved humanity less genuine than Lord G——'s.

As soon as he appeared before her, she told
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him, that nothing but the utmost necessity could ever have induced her to make a discovery which could not fail to wound the feelings of one whom she truly esteemed ; and, to be short, gave him to understand, that his own happiness could not but be greatly impaired, from the information she had to communicate. She then, with undissembled modesty, discovered her breast ; and added, that she was an unfortunate female, doomed to fall under the imputation of crimes she neither did, nor ever would wish to commit. Her language was now powerful enough to give her relation that colour of veracity, which but a few days before it could not command. Lord G—— admired her much, and went even so far as to make honourable proposals ;— but when he found she could not accept of his offer, he without delay paid her three hundred pounds, for the unmerited injury her character had suffered. She then made haste to leave a place so hostile to her reputation, and where many strange reports were blazed abroad, with incredible rapidity. She posted some days, without meeting a single adventure, worthy of notice. Overtaking at last, upon the road, one of those who perform
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the office of a solicitor in courts of equity, she engages him to instruct her in the essentials of his profession. She made such rapid progress in the study of law, that she was soon every where admired; having all the graces that Chesterfield gives to Marlborough, without the least title to the opposite charge, of being eminently illiterate.

As soon as she took up business for herself, in the line of an Attorney, an amazing success pursued her, and fame attended her banner wherever she appeared. Pressing business soon called her to a distant part of the country. When she had reached the place of her destination, she found, in the house where she lodged, a poor man, who had been in some menial office about the family, seized with a severe colic, and thought at the point of death. Blyth-fame, whose humanity had suffered no diminution from her good fortune, was exceedingly attentive to him, and administered cordials that gave immediate relief. But how great was her pleasure and surprise, when she got a full view of her patient, and read Theophilo Griffin in every feature of his face. She asked, if ever he had a female friend? He replied, that he had,
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and that her name was Agnes Manlius. She then proposed to engage him for her servant ; but at the same time, gave him to understand, that she would only employ a faithful attentive person, and a man of character. He told her she might depend upon his honesty. Well, said she, that is with me the principal requisite, and an apology for a variety of foibles. She then inquired into the character of the family ; of which he gave her this candid description : Mr and Mrs True-faith disfigure not their creed ; for it is not on particular days, nor yet for particular purposes, that they use the articles of their religion : no, they are in reality what they profess to be, plain, honest, and industrious characters, free from all guile and deceit.

But it will be necessary, before I proceed further in the business, continued she, to know the sentiments of your master and mistress. This point was speedily settled ; for the matter was no sooner understood, than their consent was freely obtained. She then and there met with a variety of pleasant incidents, and, among others, found Captain Fairline, in the person of her client ; a discovery which tended to interest her feelings,

feelings, and strengthen her exertions in his cause. His owners were attempting to defraud him of a thousand pounds, and had hired all the pettifoggers of that place against him ; when he was advised to write for Blyth-fame, whose reputation was current every where. Blyth-fame had all the technical terms of the law forgot, that she soon confounded her opponents, and gained the plea, with expences. The honest captain was much taken with the abilities of his lawyer, and told him to make his own terms. Captain Fairline, said she, the generosity and goodness of your heart I well know ; and as there is none present but ourselves, to convince you that I have not the least doubt of your honour, allow me to inform you, that I am the very female you took from the rock, and for whom you inclosed the twelve guineas in a pound of tea. You must promise me inviolable secrecy ; and this is all the fee I demand. A gold watch, and a diamond ring, he would insist upon her accepting as a present : and then they parted in admiration of each other. She and her servant went home, with an intention to settle all her business, and return to her native country.

country. At leisure hours, she diverted herself very much with Theophilo, and appeared upon a more familiar footing with him,—than he had any title to expect. She came home one day in great glee, and told him, she had got flattering news for him, which were worth a whole handful of money. She said, she had been looking out a wife for him, and had pitched upon a very handsome girl, with whom, she was persuaded, he would live quite happy. The poor man could only answer her at first with tears; but at last he exclaimed, Alas! alas! all my happiness of that kind is already decided. You seem, continued she, to take the matter so seriously, that your complaint must surely arise from some extraordinary cause. To you, Mr Blyth-same, I should open my breast without reserve; and from the familiarity with which you have treated me, such confidence you might very naturally expect: for since the first day of my engagement with you, the scene of my life is not more changed, than the disposition of my mind: my enjoyments are pregnant with inexpressible tranquillity. I have truly experienced more uninterrupted pleasure in one hour, than I had tasted

for several years. But, after all, I know, that, for the crime I have committed, you will think I ought to be discharged from your service, as a wretch unworthy of compassion; while, at the same time, your goodness of heart will incline you to pity my misfortunes. To complain of disasters on some particular occasions, said his master, is quite allowable; but to bear adversity with fortitude and silent resignation, is manly: nay, it is more than manly, for it raises human nature above mortality. Think of the animating sentiments of him who divinely exclaimed,

“ Were I as tall as reach the sky,
Or grasp the ocean in a span,
I would be measur’d by my soul;
The mind’s the standard of the man.”

Or, in other words, “ My hand I fasten on the stars, and bid earth roll, nor feel her idle whirl,” You may thoughtlessly suppose, the complexion of your troubles so dark and unusual, that others cannot feel the emotion of kindred sympathy, nor a compassionate wish to share in your cares; but such a supposition is rash and ungenerous, and therefore ought not to be indulged. Faith recommends

recommends to our attention, the model of all refinement. If he who is a stranger to imperfection, bears with the best of us, we should frequently reflect on his mildness and patience; and endeavour, as much as possible, to imitate and exemplify the same disposition to our fellow-sufferers. Sorrows are made light by sharing them; and perhaps your crime may not appear to me in the same dark colours, with which the painting of a gloomy imagination, which is ever apt to exaggerate the leading lineaments of the picture, may represent it to yourself. To feed continually on melancholy or cloudy images, is quite unsuitable to the dignity of a Christian; neither is it paying proper respect to the Author of our mercies, who giveth us all things liberally to enjoy, and upbraideth not. Industry is neither calculated to create pain, nor to sow the seed of affliction, (which is a plant of spontaneous growth), but the balm which religion kindly imparts to the dejected spirit; and if it cannot completely heal the wound, it will at least abate its pain, by engaging the body in some useful exercise, or the mind in some suitable train of thought. Al-

though the child may be out of temper with the parent, for refusing at certain times the gratification of his fancy ; yet he may be made sensible, at a future period, how much the judgement of the father was preferable to his own ; and of the gratitude he owes him for the interest he took in his happiness. Unexpected treasures may fall into the hand of a miser, and princes may confer public honours on whom they please ; but the inheritance of a virtuous name, and the veneration of ages, are badges of distinction which must in some measure be the fruit of our own exertions, rather than of accidental circumstances. The man that would be truly rich, says Seneca, must not so much increase his fortune, as study to retrench his luxury. Therefore, in place of nursing a spirit of discontent, how much more commendable is it, whatever our situation may be, to practise the lessons of Christian philosophy. Should we only take the trouble to compare notes with many around us in the world, in all probability, we might often see cause not to repine, but rather to be thankful for our own situation. It is a command of temper that constitutes the character of all heroes ;

roes ; and it is a great comfort, as well as an object worthy of particular attention, that if we are not wholly exempted from sufferings, our conduct under them should be such, as to declare that we wish to remove the cause of their continuation. I hope you are now fully persuaded, that I am inclined rather to mitigate your present complaint, than to create you new distresses ; and therefore I expect you will favour me with a free and candid relation of a disappointment that seems to have been attended with particular incidents.

He then began, and gave her a minute detail of the whole business between himself and *Dark-craft*. The treachery of the nurse rose to her view in all its deformity ; and she felt in her bosom a glow of displeasure, which required all her discretion to conceal. However, she called to her aid all the philosophy of which she was mistress ; and assuming, as much as she was able, the air of a disinterested person, made use of some tender expressions, in a condoling strain, assured him of the continuation of her esteem and patronage ; and added, that his integrity, she thought, deserved a much better fate than that

of the cruel injury he had met with. "But Theophilo, "said she," your wife may be still alive." His reply gave a negative to the supposition: "What would you say, if that odious fellow had imposed upon your credulity, and found ways and means to steal the articles he produced to you, as a proof of your wife's incontinency. If you was convinced of this, how would you treat him?" I would pray God to give him a sight of his wickedness, and think he had acted a base part indeed. "The refinement of your mind, I cannot help admiring; for surely that generous benevolent spirit, that tramples down revenge, that triumphs over premeditated villany, or silences the clamour of its enemies, is entitled to esteem, though bewildered by rash credulity. I must own, that I feel myself much interested in your cause; and as I intend soon to visit that part of the world, I will use every exertion to recover your estate." Theophilo had no great inclination to appear in a place where his misfortunes had been so complicated and uncommon; but Blyth-fame insisted upon his going, and in his present character of a servant. When they reached her father's house, the whole family

mily attacked the base man, as they called him, and threatened to make an end of him, without either judge or jury.' Upon your peril, touch him even with one of your fingers, said she, he is my servant, and if he has committed any action out of character, justice is open, and the law of the land must either acquit or condemn him. A warrant to apprehend him was immediately obtained. Blyth-fame attended him to his place of confinement; and when she took her leave, recommended resignation and a good heart; for that she would see him soon, and safely set at liberty. She thought it was perfectly requisite to secure *Dark-craft*; and went herself with the party to execute the warrant. She surprised him over a jovial bowl, with his frothy companions; told him, that his villany was fully detected, and vengeance ready to take hold of him. The keys and the charter were immediately secured; and when she came to the apartment where her own nurse lay sick, she could scarcely restrain her indignation. "You wicked woman," she exclaimed, "you are a disgrace to your sex: what could have tempted you to treat your foster child with such unmerited barbarity?"

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You are in a few days to appear before God, the righteous judge of all, whom you have egregiously offended: I pray that he may have mercy upon your soul, and meet you with a different treatment from what you gave her." She made a candid confession of her guilt; and the taking down of her deposition did not in the least lessen her horror: confusion and terror every moment stared her in the face, and in the greatest agony she soon expired. Against *Darkcraft*, the proof was so clear, that he could not escape: He was sentenced to be hanged. The judges and lawyers were quite astonished at the eloquence and address of Blyth-fame; but, notwithstanding of this, the first day of Griffin's trial, produced no great cause of exultation. After the Court was dismissed, Blyth-fame made up to Mr Manlius, praised his horse very much, and asked what might be his value? Thirty guineas, he replied. She immediately paid the money; and as soon as she had deliverance, she took a pistol out of her pocket, and shot the horse dead upon the spot. Mr Manlius seemed to be out of temper at this mad action, as he called it. Blyth-fame told him, she would
soon

soon make a public reply to his observation. Against next court-day, she begged the judges attention to a particular circumstance; then related the altercation between herself and Mr Manlius; and asked, if they thought her conduct any way culpable, or deserving of punishment? The prevailing voice declared in her favour. Well, said she, by the same rule of reasoning, this man must come off clear. I understand he has paid ten or eleven hundred pounds for his wife; and if he had shot her as I did my horse, who could blame him? I should think the man that sold her ought to be the very last person that should open his lips upon the subject. The matter had been so nicely stated, that neither judges nor jury had any scruple to acquit him. She then made a full discovery of herself, in open court. Theophilo, you have now by the hand Agnes Manlius; after breaking asunder the clouds of false accusation, we are now upon a level; for if once you made a purchase of me, I have now saved your life. She then looked to the judges, and expressed a wish, not to take possession of her estate, with her hands imbrued in the blood of *Dark-craft*. She then
pleaded

pleaded for a mitigation of his sentence ; which was accordingly changed into perpetual banishment.

I shall now leave Mr and Mrs Griffin in the country where I found them, and allow them the quiet enjoyment of their own estate, with a constant flow of invariable happiness : for I truly think they deserve no less. And as I mentioned in the beginning, that the description is mostly indebted to the colours of imagination, and not built upon facts ; I suppose this apology will be deemed sufficient for the liberty I have taken, and free me from the charge of intended imposition.

The moral it inculcates is quite plain : Though God, in his wise Providence, and for ends best known to himself, allows lawless proceedings to rage, and sometimes to prevail in the world ; though virtue has frequently felt the insults of triumphant vice, and for a while been basely trampled under foot ; we see it ~~often~~, by unaccountable windings, re-ascending from obscurity, and coming mildly forward to view ; while the wickedness of the wicked issues in a speedy or disgraceful end.

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We see the fibres of many false plots wonderfully traced through the dark steps of artful contrivance, or secret machinations; and their deformity exposed to the glare of day.

The favour of God is always interested in the cause of virtue: even when struggling with the clouds of unmerited reproach, a consciousness of rectitude helps much to disarm the sting of trial; and what ought to make the pursuit of virtue an object of emulation is, that her votaries are, or should be, adorned with trophies of unfading fame.

Where true affection takes a seat in the soul, and sincerity secures the key of the heart, such progress will soon be manifest, that the face of the object we love will seem to upbraid us, if ever we entertain an improper idea; and criminal desires will labour in vain to meet with indulgence. The passions of the human breast are many, and no less various in their nature than the colours by which they are delineated. Artifice, under borrowed features, may stretch its hand to grasp the prize that is not its due: But the mask, however artfully decorated, is too thin and coarse to screen long from detection
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the deformity it would attempt to hide. And whenever we see wicked designers surprised in their own snare, exposed in their own dress, and disappointed of their secret and infamous intentions,—we rejoice in such discoveries, feel sincere pleasure at the escape of innocence, and bless that propitious power, who wisely overrules the affairs of the world. To all singular cases we attend with a sort of enthusiasm; at the relation of intricate and interesting scenes which touch the heart, the breast glows with anxious emotions. When we see justice impartially administered, integrity snatched from imminent danger, and virtue meet with its deserved reward,—we find a gratification which yields us more than ordinary pleasure. In the first book of Kings, ch. iii. 19. we see a plain instance of treachery completely detected. With astonishment we behold the piercing judgement, and quick fancy, of the wise King of Israel. Unbiased integrity, connected with tender movements of humanity, are amiable qualifications in any character; but much more so in persons of eminence: not that such examples are rare, but because from distinguished personages they have
always

always a commanding influence. Two women appeared before him, claiming the living child: the King interested himself keenly in this business, and his ingenuity in finding out the real mother may well be called an acute stroke of a happy invention: "He called for a sword, and said, Divide the living child, and let each have an half: then spake the mother, for her compassion was kindled towards her son, O my Lord, give her the living child, and slay him not." These words are richly coloured with the tender feelings of a generous heart. What an affecting scene! the agitation of her mind, how difficult to describe! When she saw the stern hand of death darkly stretched forth, to tear the babe of her bosom, from sharing in her future joy,—anxiety must have filled up every painful period which elapsed, and serious suspense stood trembling for the final decision. The superior quality of tender feelings, like the bright beams of the sun, is expressively displayed, not only by the radiance of its own power, but by a contrast with the callous colours of insensibility. Rude tracts, and uncultivated mountains, make the beauty of the fertile plain more attractive; we

could not form an adequate idea of the rich materials that composed the mind of the mother, had not this unfeeling character of an impostor appeared. What an odious picture does the whole of her conduct exhibit ! all that seemed to give her any concern, was the censure of the world ; for as to any remains of virtue, or virtuous principles, these are altogether out of the question. I blush for her barbarity, “ let the child be neither thine nor mine but divide it.”

What a base heart is here brought to view ! who can repeat the expression without feelings of disapprobation ? the language and tone of indignation are naturally annexed to such a character. Where no remains of benevolence or modesty possess the heart, it is quite impossible that such a barren soil can produce any of the fruits of piety, or respect to God.

Humanity and cruelty are so widely different in their nature, that to suppose a coalition to take place between them, would be no less than a contradiction in terms. The pretended mother, while she continued under the screen of night, thought herself perfectly secure from the blast of ridicule. The deceitful gloss which covered the

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mean furniture of her grovelling soul, was all the effect of malice, or the spume of envy; for the destruction of the child, to her, was a matter of moonshine, while the anxiety it would produce in the breast of the mother would occasion a cloud of sorrow, and an age of pain. But from a state of painful suspense, her mind was transformed to unexpected tranquillity, by the impartial sentence which was suddenly pronounced: "Then said the King, Give her the living child, and slay him not; for this is his mother." The mind that is inured to the paths of virtue, always carries with it the surest antidote against the venom of reproach, and every thing else by which vice attempts to stigmatize it. It is not only necessary that wickedness be denied applause, but that goodness be commended in proportion to its quality: for it would be a pity to suffer the garland of virtue and religion to remain, or to fade, on the brow of a false pretender.

The sensible female will require no reasoning to convince her, that the beginning of ill-habits is no less to be dreaded than their conclusion; and therefore will never join in the laugh of

those who affect to be witty, at the expence of humanity, virtue, or religion. She will shew no shyness in acquainting them, that such subjects are quite disagreeable to her taste; that she is neither out of conceit with virtue, nor yet ready to embrace vice. It was an usual, but political charge, given of old, to fight neither great nor small; but only the King of Israel. So these Bolinbrokes, Voltaires, Rosseaus, Gibbons, and the modern Deist Paine, who have openly declared themselves the enemies of mankind, having studied the shortest way to anarchy, take every opportunity of making savage thrusts at religion, and of wickedly exposing it as the butt of their ridicule; just as if merit consisted in destroying what is sacred, and seriously interesting to every civilized nation. A profane wit is indeed a contemptible character: in the time of the Psalmist, the *fool* thought the very same things that these do. And to deserve the epithet *fool* can be no great compliment. Their prohibited artifices are much worse than of no value, and therefore should meet with no favour. The learned Bishop Watson, whose character, as a man of letters, is deservedly

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established, and whose piety and goodness of heart are entitled to lasting respect, has, with his usual ingenuity, painted infidels in the deformed colours due to their character; and so much to the purpose, as one would think sufficient to make all those in the least tinctured with their principles, blush, repent, and attempt reformation, when they take a serious view of the pitiful picture which their own character exhibits.

Mr Erskine, our Ciceronian Orator, that moving library of knowledge and information, never fails, in his public exhibitions, whenever an apt opportunity occurs, to pay this class well home; and his reasoning is so clear, his wit so genuine, and his satire so keen, that the wounds he inflicts must be severely felt.

A respectable character, with whom I have the honour to be acquainted, and whose conversation I have often thought a perfect luxury, in talking one day of Deistical writers, made this sensible remark, "Men's words are soon forgotten, but the performances of those who write for the edification of mankind exist for ages: when scepticism speaks with audacity,

and infidelity is seen without a mask, the consequence is melancholy, and much more dangerous than many are aware of. If some will be singular, and are disposed to entertain distempered and noxious opinions, it would be somewhat honest to bury their sentiments in their own breasts, and not to wound the feelings of others, by a bold avowal of them." This frenzy of destroying the sinews of virtue, or the happiness of mankind, was long less known than it has been of late years ; because it so glaringly depreciated the dignity of human nature, that it was allowed to lurk in the den of darkness, where it should always be confined. I shall now take my leave of it, by wishing its deluded votaries a more generous way of thinking.

In the early ages of the world, we find measures for encouraging virtue publicly established in many countries. The Egyptians, I think, had once a law which ordained, that the character and actions of those eminently distinguished for moral refinement should be solemnly canvassed before their best judges, in order to regulate what degree of fame was due to their memory. No dignity however exalted,
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no abilities however extraordinary, could unjustly seize, in the competition, the prize of genuine virtue. Moral refinement alone was the road to honour, and the character by which their names were eternised and raised to sacred respect. To ingenuous minds this was a powerful incentive to the pursuit of virtue, and also a strong restraint to the wicked and thoughtless, in the career of vice. Greece had many examples to boast of, and the Romans were always liberal in their encomiums and rewards, when female merit reached the pinnacle of approbation. If the distaff of Tanaquil, the consort of Tarquin, was thought worthy of notice in their public records, and consecrated to the temple of Hercules, as a memorial of acknowledged industry, and a copy worthy of imitation,—with the same propriety, the Renfrewshire jessamine may be thought a distinguished copy of virtue and conjugal affection. What a generous exclamation! “My cloaths, and whatever else you chuse, are before you; but, for God’s sake, save my husband’s life!” What feeling heart could behold her on her bended knees,
and

and hear her tender request without sympathy and admiration !

For the encouragement of virtue, and the reward of merit, it were to be wished subordination would take place in the female world, as well as in the scenes of civil life. Warriors who signalize themselves in the service of their country, are raised to lucrative stations, and the rank of nobility. Pensions also are given to men eminent for their abilities ; while an amiable accomplished female, whose bright example is of such singular interest to the society with which she is connected, is not much noticed, excepting by a few of her intimate acquaintances ; and, when she is no more, her good actions vanish with herself. The *bona dea* was a distinction instituted at Rome, and might have continued with fame unsullied, had it not been for the abuse it met with from a base character.

It were to be wished our amiable Queen, who is an example of singular refinement to all her subjects, would invent some honorary title, or distinguish some of our deserving females with badges of dignity, corresponding to the character they maintained, and the part they acted, as an
incitement

incitement to virtue, and the study of mental improvement.

So much for the Mental Pick ; and if I have made use of any unguarded or indelicate thought, calculated in the least to hurt the morals, or wound the feelings of the reader, I hope they will have charity enough to ascribe it to inadvertency, rather than to a voluntary bias towards immorality : for if I have penned any indecent expression, I may honestly say, it was more than I either wished or intended.

A false mirror, which misrepresents its object, or alluring artifices which fear the light, and lead to the precipice of ruin, or help to lull the mind asleep in the lap of profaneness, vanity, or self-sufficiency, I have considered as rude invaders of the happiness of an accomplished female. And, from principle as well as from taste, I have had a sincere desire to keep at a distance, if possible, from forming an acquaintance with such hostile imposters. Flattery, the avowed enemy of improvement, which too often serves as fuel to feed the flames of levity, I have had no inclination to enter into terms of reconciliation with, nor to join in the excursion of its consumptive party.

party. But how far I have kept closely to such resolutions, others will be more competent judges of than myself. Amidst the many elegant and learned productions, with which our age and country abound, that my simple Pick should meet with favour or indulgence, at the expences of folding together the instructive and entertaining pages of approved performances, that merit the most serious and attentive perusal, is more than I can reasonably expect; and therefore I shall banish such flattering thoughts: for it makes its appearance more by way of a memorial of hints, than a system of instruction. At an idle hour, or a solitary walk, it might help, plain and artless as it is, to suggest ideas productive either of amusement or improvement. That the female of character and merit may every where meet with the respect due to mental beauties, will never be an eye-sore to me. Though I have not the ingenuity of Aristogenes, nor can surprise Clementina with her own exact resemblance, as he did Celonia with his handsome looking-glass; yet she may observe, from this faint attempt of a weak artist, what he
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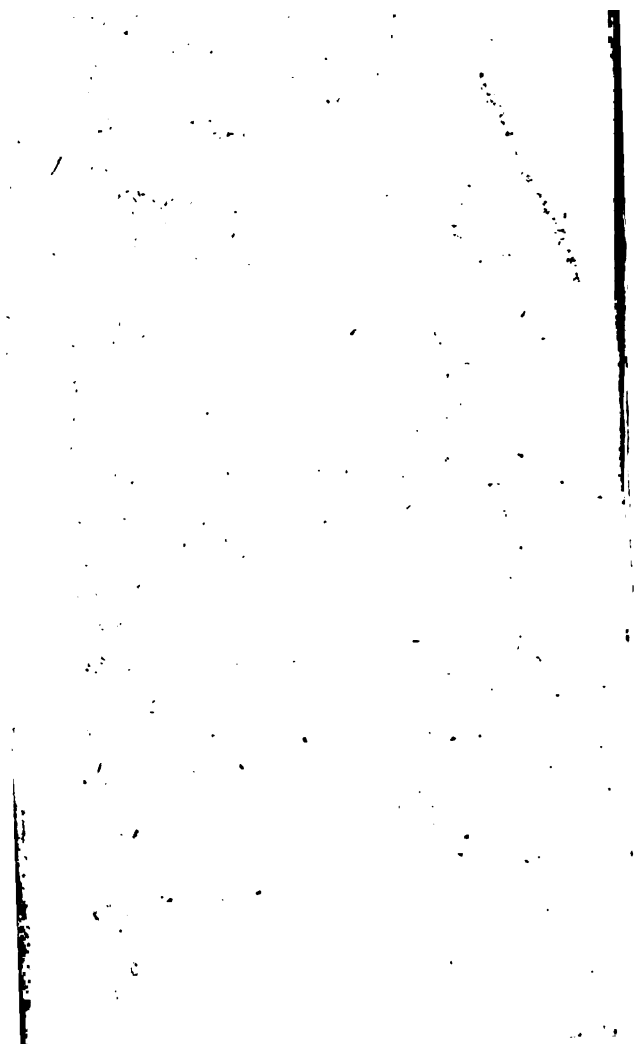
would be willing to perform, if his abilities were equal to his inclination.

I shall have no objections that the plains of her residence should be richly perfumed with the fragrance of every amiable accomplishment. May not only the virtues of the new name mentioned in scripture, known to those only who receive the heavenly appellation, be liberally imparted to her, but may her happiness be also made stationary.

If the external construction of her frame is neat and comely, may the internal temper of her mind be equable and virtuous: May her frame be more lasting, and her beauty more durable, than the transient fragrance, or fading bloom of a puny summer-flower: May it continue to flourish with eternal verdure, and be bright like the sun in the height of his beauty. That the blessings of health and happiness may ever smile around her, and the favour of her God, without an eclipse, continue her inheritance in time and eternity, is the sincere desire of

PHILO GUNA.





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